ADVENTURES IN SERVICE

by

George C. F. Pringle

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by

George C. F. Pringle
Author of "Tillicums of the Trail"

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FOREWORD.

IN a life lived mostly on the frontier I have had some experiences that seemed to me of real human interest. I have tried to write down a few of these in plain, straightforward language. They are all true in substance. The details, too, are accurately given, except in a few instances where the courtesies required that I should hide names and places.

I have sought to make these stories yield more than entertainment. You will discover in these pages those principles which have emerged unshaken from the testing of much severe experience and a thousand forms of attack.

GEORGE C. F. PRINGLE.

Vanada, B.C.

No one could tell me
What my Soul might be.
I sought for God
And He eluded me.
I sought my Brother,
And I found All Three.

ADVENTURES IN SERVICE

CHAPTER I.

A QUITTER.

I WAS feeling pretty blue that night as we pounded through the Yuculta rapids in the darkness and the rain. Eight months before the Canadian Presbyterian Church had brought me back from Edinburgh to take over their Loggers' Mission. The missionary was expected to minister to tide-water logging camps in lonely districts along the British Columbia coast. I had "signed on" for five years and now at the end of eight months I was getting fed up. The launch we had was the *Mina W.*, a dilapidated second-hand affair with an ancient gasoline engine on it that at times was enough to make a preacher swear! The hull of the boat was rotten and leaked badly. Caulking it was practically useless. The first storm would open the seams again and it would be as bad as ever. Usually my engineer and I had to stay up until about eleven at night, pumping it dry with a hand-pump, in order to be able to stay in our berths until seven in the morning. If we delayed rising much beyond that hour we would find the water seeping through the

floor! I knew then very little about motor-boats and thought that these discomforts were just the usual thing and that I must keep on and try to be "a hero in the strife." No one was to blame. The responsible Vancouver committee thought, I suppose, as I did, that a boat is a boat and a gas-engine is a gas-engine. Sometimes I heard them called by other names not commonly used in polite society. Such was the *Mina W.*, and such was the engine. Experience has taught us much and we are wiser. I have now a fine, new boat, well-engined. But that's looking two years ahead.

That night I was in the doldrums when, after running the aforesaid six miles of howling tidal rapids in the dark, (a fool thing that only a greenhorn would attempt), I anchored in Shoal Bay. During these fall and winter months of 1920-21, I, an unknown preacher, had been endeavoring to get a footing of friendship and confidence in the camps. I had found it very difficult. In fact it seemed to me that I was as much an outsider as when I started. I find no fault with the loggers. In general they were good fellows. I never went hungry or lacked a place to sleep when I was back in the camps, but they seemed to have little use for a preacher. They presumed that I adopted the attitude so frequently taken by a missionary that the loggers were all rough fellows going plumb to hell. Their antagonism had been aroused by some peripatetic missionary, earnest but ignorant, who had approached them with

the "holier-than-thou" atmosphere. They had become disgusted by his unintentionally insulting manners. This had put them against preachers. Then, too, it was immediately after the war and there was a spirit of revolt in the air against the old conditions and institutions from which the world conflict had come. The church was one of these old institutions. It had failed to prevent the war, had indeed never raised a voice against it. But enough of that. All I want to have you realize just here is that I had dismally failed so far to get a hearing in the camps, and it was taking the heart out of me. I was almost always treated with reasonable courtesy, never the slightest sight of horse-play, but in camp after camp, after I had announced my evening meeting in the cookhouse and rung the gong for the men to gather, nobody, or only one or two, would show up. This kind of thing and the misery of the boat was gradually forcing me to the shameful decision I made that night.

Hanson had a camp in Shoal Bay of about sixty men. I had been in twice that winter. The first visit no one came to hear me. The second time two or three straggled in. I didn't preach to them. We sat down around the stove and I spun them yarns about the Klondike, among them the story of the time I stole two hundred dollars from a sourdough friend. This was to be the third visit. I came as a matter of duty. After supper Price and I had to soon start at

our regular evening task of pumping the boat out. We took turns for a while then I asked him to do one spell for me as I wanted to write a letter. I sat down and wrote as follows to the convenor of my committee:

I am ashamed to write this letter but I feel compelled to do it. I find myself unexpectedly unfitted for this job. For nearly a year I have been trying to get in touch with the men and have miserably failed. Painful experiences have forced me to the conclusion that I am not the man for the place. You will have to give me something easier. The boat is damp and unseaworthy. If I stay on another year I shall suffer seriously in health, get too cranky to preach about the love of God, or get crooked and be reporting work that I am not doing.

I am in earnest in asking you to accept my resignation. I am willing to carry on, if you wish, until you send a suitable man to take the work over.

Yours regretfully,
GEORGE C. F. PRINGLE.

I sealed and addressed the letter and put the required stamp on it, three cents in those days. I am a Scot so you see when I put that stamp on I meant business! I laid the letter on the desk and took my turn at the pump. I had a troubled night's sleep. The damp, smelly, atrocious atmosphere of the boat, the rattling of the anchor chain, and my conscience, all combined to bother me.

Next day the sun was shining and the sea quiet. After dinner I rowed to the float. The boss came down and took my line and gave me a friendly greeting. When I got out he said, "Are you going to give

us a spiel to-night, Mr. Pringle?" I replied that I would if anyone would come to hear me, that I didn't seem to be getting next to the fellows at all and was ready to quit. "Don't you worry," he replied, "you'll have a bunch out to listen to you to-night all right. Those three guys that heard you last time are boosting for you. Tell 'em a Klondike story again and you can work in a little preaching on the side. They are commencing to like you. You don't seem like a preacher." I do not know whether that last is a compliment or not but somehow these words of the boss cheered me immensely.

Walking the long string of logs that connects these floats with the shore is usually difficult without "calk boots." These calks (pronounced "corks" in the camps) are short sharp nails projecting from the lower surface of the sole so as to keep your feet from slipping. All the loggers wear them. I had only ordinary heavy shoes. I have often fallen in. I did on this occasion. My friend helped me out and took me into his shack, (being the boss he had a separate place). There I undressed, hung up my clothes around the stove, got into the bunk and stayed there until my garments were dry. Then I dressed. There was no harm done. Indeed to fall into the salt water fully clad makes you feel more comfortable afterwards especially when you've been sleeping in bunkhouses. It drowns some of the beggars!

I saw the Chinese cook and arranged to have the cookhouse ready for service about half-past seven. Then I walked back into the woods where the men were at work. I had time only to go over to one of the donkey engines. The engineer was a stranger to me. I sought to engage him in conversation. He replied to my observations civilly enough but he wasn't a self-starter. At least I told him my name and asked him his. He said, "McRae." I took another chance and asked him where he was from and he answered, "Prince Edward Island." He was polite but not an inch more. I refused to be shut up and went on to inform him that my mother came from Murray Harbor South, P. E. Island, that her maiden name was Cowan. He immediately commenced to take notice. He told me his mother's name was Ross. It turned out that one of his mother's brothers courted one of my mother's sisters! Common stuff maybe, but it got us so interested that we forgot about donkey-engines and preachers and were just swapping yarns we used to hear our mothers tell us when we were boys.

A signal came from the whistle-punk and he had to turn to his work. Before he did he asked me if I were going to preach in the camp and said, "I was out till ten last night and up at four this morning fixing this old heap of junk and so I'm half-dead for lack of sleep, but I'll surely be out to hear you. We herring-chokers must stick together!"

I'll get along now and tell you about the meeting, for this time there really was one. I rang the gong outside the cookhouse door as usual and then went in and sat on the bench beside my Bible and hymn books. The cook had lighted the lamps and stoked up the stove so the place was fairly comfortable. I hardly dared let myself hope for anybody and could hardly trust my ears when I heard sounds of men coming. Along the platforms in front of the bunk-houses, down through the mud to the cookhouse, up its steps and in they came, awkwardly and rather embarrassed. They didn't know what I might make them do, might "save their souls before they could stop me," as one of them said.

They ranged along and sat down on each side of the table set with dishes for breakfast. Forty altogether out of a group of sixty. Believe me, I felt happy. I distributed the hymn-books and we tried an easy hymn. They were shy about hymn-singing so I sang pretty much alone, the men emitting a kind of harmonious, sympathetic groan! Then I said the Lord's Prayer and they sat down. Next I read a few verses of Scripture and started my talk. My voice was husky with a cold. I hadn't spoken many words when I heard the sound of the Chinaman coming from the kitchen-end of the cookhouse. When he drew near I turned around and there he was, a smile on his face, his yellow hand outstretched with a glass of cold

water. I took it with real gratitude. It was the very thing I needed for my feverish throat. I thanked him. He just smiled and went back to the kitchen where he thought he belonged. The recollection flashed through my memory of One who spoke about a cup of water given in His name, and then a line or two of Kipling's *Gunga Din* came to mind where the British Tommy speaks of the outcast native regimental "bhisti," the water-carrier who served the soldiers under fire in the old days:—

> You Lazarushian-leather Gunga Din!
> Though I've belted you and flayed you,
> By the livin' Gawd that made you,
> You're a better man than I am, Gunga Din.
>
> And for all his dirty hide
> He was white, clear white, inside.

Yes, McRae was there! He stumbled in like a drunken man he was so tired and sleepy. I can see him sitting at the end of the row. There were no backs to the benches so he rested his head for a moment on his hands on the table. It was fatal! He went sound asleep and slept peacefully right through the meeting! We had to shake him vigorously to rouse him at the close. That man asleep there was one of the finest tributes I've ever had paid me in church. If I had been half as tired as McRae I know I'd have decided that I needed my sleep a great deal more than preaching. I would have climbed into my bunk with a clear

conscience and let the meeting do without me. But it was just that common old magic we call friendship that brought him out. Our mothers had come from "the Island," we both had memories in common, and, well, "we herring-chokers must stick together!"

I dressed my message about Jesus in Klondike garb. No man could want a better hearing. They got the best I had. I spoke straight from my heart, ran it through the sieve of my intellect, and gave them my "finest of the wheat." I don't know what churches they had been brought up in. They were work-weary men with burdens and sins, memories and tender hearts, those who loved them and those whom they loved. I was, without pretence, just one of themselves telling them frankly and simply about the comfort a Great Friend had been to me. I closed with a short prayer for ourselves and our dear ones. A handshake all round, a mutual kind word or two, and they went off to their bunks. We brought McRae back to consciousness. He was surprised and ashamed at what he had done. He apologizes almost every time we meet.

One of the men saw me safely along the logs to the float and into my boat. I rowed off with the pleasant music of a heartily-spoken, "Come back soon!" sounding in my ears. I climbed aboard the mission-boat, tied my skiff securely, and then walked down into the cabin and got that letter.

I went back to the stern and stood there with arms stretched out into the darkness and tore the thing up into small pieces, stamp and all, and scattered it upon the waters of Shoal Bay as an offering to the God, who, I judge, hasn't much use for "a quitter!"

CHAPTER II.

SMOKED OUT.

WHEN would-be preachers are learning to preach there must be a certain amount of heroic endurance demanded of the listeners! The young fellow has to start in somewhere and practise on some group of patient Christians, or else he would never learn. It is usually in sparsely-settled districts, farming or frontier, that the novitiate makes his first awkward attempts at sermonizing, for it is to such districts that theological students are sent in the summer months. Spending their college vacation in the good work they also earn money to help defray the expenses of the winter sessions. Apropos of this, I'll dare to repeat a very old story of a student who had returned to college in the autumn after his first experience in charge of a summer mission field. He was a shy young man who took his work very seriously and the new experience of preaching had been extremely trying to his health. He looked very weak and worn when he presented himself for registration. The Principal, after a good look at him said, "Dear me, Jones, you must have had a very difficult field this summer. You look all played out!" "Yes sir," said

Jones, "I look that way and feel that way, *but you ought to see the people!*"

Well, we have all suffered at the hands of preachers and we have our stories to tell about them. But it is also true that preachers have had exhausting encounters with their congregations. All this leads me to the relating of some unusual and unpleasant experiences I had during the second season I spent on a home mission field.

In the summer of 1896, while I was an undergraduate of University College, Toronto, I went out to southeastern Minnesota in the Mississippi Valley, to take charge again of the mission-field where I had done my first preaching the summer before. There were two schoolhouse appointments at which I held regular services. They were about fifteen miles apart on the rolling prairie. I used a horse and two-wheeled cart to make my rounds. Autos were unknown.

This summer another settlement was one day mentioned to me, at which there was no preaching. It was about eight miles past Pleasant Valley and in a well-wooded section. The people living there were principally engaged in the cutting of cordwood and hauling it on sleighs in winter to Rochester, a neighboring town which was then just coming into the lime-light as the home of the now world-famous surgeon-brothers, Charles and William Mayo. The name of the little settlement was Genoa. The prosperous

prairie farmers looked upon the Genoa people as comparatively ignorant and uncouth. It was reported that no preacher had visited the place for a year or two because of the rough usage some of them had previously received. Now this Genoa district was so near Pleasant Valley that it constituted a perpetual challenge to me. My conscience commenced to work on the question of my duty to Genoa and I knew that I would have to tackle it sooner or later if I were to have any peace of mind.

So one day I wrote the Genoa postmaster requesting him to put up an anouncement that, if I could get permission to use the schoolhouse, I would preach there the following Sunday evening. I held service in the Pleasant Valley school in the afternoon and then Bob Parsons hitched up his two black drivers and we trotted across the prairie, into the Genoa woods, and up to the schoolhouse in fine style. The horses were unhitched and put in Charlie De Motte's stable. It was near the hour for the meeting and quite a good-sized crowd gathered in. Someone had lighted a little fire in the stove for the evening was chilly. The older people sat towards the front, the young men and women at the back.

When I announced the opening hymn I could tell that there was a lot of giggling and talking going on at the back, but we got through the hymn safely and I was reading some verses from the Bible when a

large wad of well-chewed gum hit me a smack in the face. This well-aimed shot produced a burst of laughter from the back benches. I was surprised and embarrassed and could hardly go on. Preaching was to me then a tremendous nerve-trying task at the best, but with gum and laughter thrown in, it was almost too much. I cut the Scripture short and gave out another hymn. During the first verse several big fellows got up and tramped out scraping their feet on the floor as they went along. One husky chap nearly got his needings. I had stepped forward towards the stove to let him pass behind me, but he crowded in front pushing himself between the stove and me. He almost brushed the hymn book out of my hand as he shoved through. For one happy barbaric moment I had a sudden impulse to "let him have it" on the bare spot right behind the ear. I was on my toes and tense for a breath. I might have killed him had I struck in a fury, for I was young and in good shape for a scrap. My good sense restrained me. After all it would have been a cowardly blow, and there's a better way than that to give your enemy a licking.

I was glad to get rid of that many disturbers anyway and figured that the noise would be lessened to that extent. So it was, but worse was to follow. It was the proverbial calm before the storm. I started to preach. In those days under the best conditions I was very nervous when speaking. Now I stammered

and became confused. I struggled on, however, as gamely as I could. I heard a noise overhead as of someone climbing up on the roof. What it meant I didn't know until the stove commenced to send out clouds of smoke. Shifting the dampers made no difference and I realized the trick they had played on me. They had stuffed up the stovepipe and were smoking us out. That finished me. I had to stop speaking and the meeting broke up in laughter and tears. I felt humiliated and mad. Some of the older folks were angry and asked me to come back, but the general feeling was that the boys had given everybody good entertainment except the preacher, and anyway a preacher was a fair target for practical jokes. The whole evening had been much more interesting and enjoyable than it would have been if they had sat still and listened to the youngster try to preach!

Bob and I withdrew as gracefully as we could, hitched up our team and drove away, back to Pleasant Valley and kind friends.

The defeat rankled, but although I hated to be beaten without another try, yet I disliked the thought of going back and getting another dose of the same nasty medicine. However I couldn't forget it and I commenced to consider if there weren't some way round this obstacle, some flanking movement instead of the conventional frontal attack. The regular procedure was to drive in, preach if you could, and drive

out right afterwards. The "hit and run" method was evidently a complete failure even to the taking of the collection! Anyway I decided to put the thing to the test once more but with a different style of approach.

I arranged by mail with Mr. and Mrs. Witt Ottman, a farmer in the Genoa district, to board me for a week. I drove over with my own pony one Monday night across from Chester to Genoa and put up at Ottman's. Then on Tuesday I started out to visit, not the settlement, but the settlers. They all lived close in and by the end of the week I had called at most of the homes. I made it a point to visit all the families in which there were young men. It wasn't hard to get on a reasonably friendly footing with the older folk. Of course, I was invited to stay for meals. Now it is difficult to be nasty to a young preacher who eats at your table and is evidently doing his best to be agreeable and entertaining. After the meal I would go out to the barn with the men and help with the chores. Afterwards perhaps we would pitch horseshoes, then I'd challenge the young fellows to competition in racing, jumping, or what I preferred, wrestling. Whether I could put my opponent on his back or not the effect of getting at close grips, struggling, warm and sweating, in a good-natured but determined effort to best your antagonist fairly, is mighty good medicine for breaking down barriers of any kind between decent human beings. Win or lose

if you are "real fellows" you both "belong" after a panting, hard-fought battle of that sort. Also common gratitude suggested that I praise the cooking of the woman folk. It was, I judge, well-deserving of praise. My appetite was keen those days and it all tasted good anyway. Then in conversation I had an acceptable contribution to make in my stories about Canada.

I had a happy week. The psychological effect of my coming to close quarters with the people of Genoa was probably the same for them as for me. I found them a most interesting and likeable lot, and to them I was now no longer simply that nondescript person "a preacher;" I had become an acquaintance and was on the way to be admitted to their circle as a friend.

On Sunday evening the schoolhouse was filled and I got a fair show in every way. The young fellows no doubt found it unthinkable to embarrass a man by throwing things at him, when he had been their guest, and had talked, and joked, and wrestled with them, and helped them with their work.

It was the same all that summer. Old and young took me to their hearts. It wasn't my preaching. I know now that must have been hard to bear. Yet there was no miracle about the change in their attitude, unless the natural, common ways and works of friendship are miracles.

Next summer I returned to Minnesota. I received

my heartiest welcome in the Genoa woods. One Sunday was an occasion worthy of record. A group of wild lads rode down from Mt. Hope, another settlement farther up the Zumbro valley. They had heard there was preaching at Genoa and they took it into their heads to come down and have the usual fun with the preacher. They met with a strangely cool reception from their Genoa pals, but they went on with the game. They walked in and out during the preaching, rode their horses around the school with yells, stuck their heads in the open windows neighing like horses, and generally did their best to make conditions insufferable for me. I lost the thread of my discourse and the attention of my congregation hopelessly. Apparently the Mt. Hope boys didn't sense anything wrong in the fact that the local fellows held aloof, or if they did, attributed it to some other cause than the right one.

The meeting closed in an orderly way. That night I had come up with my friend Bob Parsons, and at the close of the service he told me that he wanted to hurry right away. We climbed into the rig and off we went. I found out afterwards that some of the Genoa fellows had given Parsons a hint to get me off the scene as soon as possible. I learned the reason when I returned next fortnight.

One of the worst free-for-all fights that had ever taken place in the village street occurred that night.

No one interfered while the local lads hammered the boys from Mt. Hope for their insolence in disturbing the service! The Genoese wanted me out of the way to avoid complications and interference while they gave those bad-acting visitors the trouncing they deserved. When I told Charlie De Motte how sorry I was he replied, "Well, it was coming to them. These Mt. Hope buckoes don't need to think they can come down here and make a fool out of our preacher!"

I have wandered far since then and passed through many and strange experiences but nothing can ever efface the memory of those days. I was young, sensitive, and unskilled in my work. The loyalty and love of those Genoa friends counted immeasurably with me. Nor do I think they have forgotten. Should I ever return I fondly believe that nowhere on earth would I get a kindlier welcome than from those young friends who may still live in that little Minnesota village.

CHAPTER III.

FIGHTING A FOREST FIRE

I LIVE on an island. It lies eight miles off the mainland in the Strait of Georgia and is called Texada. It is about thirty miles long and eight wide, of igneous formation, heavily mineralized with deposits of copper, iron, and gold. Its surface is rough and rocky, mountainous almost, and covered with great trees. Beneath these there flourishes a heavy undergrowth of alder, willow and other smaller stuff, the whole making a dense jungle higher than a man's head.

It is strange that on such a large island there are no dangerous wild animals, no wolf, cougar, or bear. All these are numerous on the mainland a few miles away and on Vancouver Island to the south-west. There are plenty of deer and pheasants, and our lakes and shore-waters are full of fish. Four hundred people live on this island, about a hundred and fifty of them around the worked-out copper mine by the sea at Vananda, and another two hundred employed by the Pacific Lime Co. at Blubber Bay, long ago, as its name suggests, the rendezvous of whalers. The rest live in solitary shacks on small bush-farms scattered

through the Gillies Bay woods. The districts I have mentioned are within eight miles of the north-west end of the island. There are over twenty miles left uninhabited, and in its native state of giant trees and thick brush, of small mountain and deep gulch, of lake and stream.

In all its natural beauty Texada is typical of the islands of this coast. It is one of a score of larger islands. There are a myriad smaller ones lying scattered along the shore-waters for six hundred miles up-coast from the city of Vancouver. Through them there runs a maze of salt water channels. It is a veritable wonderland. I cannot believe there is anything of its kind in the world that is at once so vast, so beautiful, and so fascinating. The ninety out of a hundred people living in Vancouver and looking out to it every-day it is almost an unknown land. The American pleasure yachts have discovered it, however, and it is fast becoming their Happy Hunting Ground. Its superb climate, its immense extent of waterways that invite endless exploration, the infinite variety and beauty of its scenery, call you back with irresistible charm.

There are two evil things in this Eden, two enemies that are dreaded by the isolated settlers and the men in camps along this littoral and throughout this wondrous archipelago. One is the fierce gales that come down on us in winter, levelling trees to the ground and

causing havoc among small coasting boats. The other is the demon of forest fires that sometimes spoils one's summers, putting the shack dweller in grave danger of loss of life and home, burning up logging camps and equipment, and filling the sea-channels with a thick haze of smoke. So great is the hazard of these fires to life and property, and so difficult, sometimes impossible, to control, that the Provincial Government finds it necessary to maintain a large special staff of fire patrolmen, and to spend hundreds of thousands of dollars in efforts to lessen the peril and damage. These patrolmen have authority in emergencies to conscript anyone into the ranks of the fire-fighters.

The summer of 1922 was very warm. And the weeks went by without rain, fires commenced to break out here and there along the far-reaching coast-line. The air became smoky. In some narrow passages the smoke became a dense fog blotting out the land and making navigation risky. On Texada we had been fortunate. No fires had been reported but we were anxious. My house was right on the sea-shore and my family safer than those living back in the woods, but there had been occasions, such as that at Lang Bay, when a fierce wind carried the flame down to the water's edge, setting fire to driftwood awash in the sand, and forcing the people into the sea to save their lives.

One day when I was home the dreaded summons

came. Someone knocked at the door and when I opened it I found our fire patrolman there. He was a young Scot named John Tawse, a word reminiscent of painful experience with the strap in boyhood days, and I was now to get what might be likened to a touch of the tawse. "I am sorry to bother you, Mr. Pringle," he said, "but a bad fire has broken out eight miles away beyond the Gillies Bay settlement and we are calling out every available man on the island to fight it. I would like you to come. Be down in front of Deighton's store in an hour. Rigs will be there to take men and equipment out to camp." My mission-boat and engineer were also commandeered to take men and supplies round the island to points that could not be conveniently reached by road or trail. We were all "in for it." It was supper-time before we got out to the place where the base-camp was being located. Tents were put up and arrangements, hastily improvised, were made for feeding and sleeping the fire-fighters. We slept in blankets on the ground crowded together under the tents or clear out in the open.

That night we were divided into several crews, each with its foreman, and after being provided with axe and shovel, were started off through the bush trails to our work. A high wind was blowing carrying the flames, with appalling rapidity, up the island towards the settlements. As we got nearer the air was filled with smoke and we could hear the distant tumult

of fire and crash of falling trees whose roots were burnt away, giant trees, most of them over a hundred feet high and many of them much taller. The fire was then a mile wide and advancing into the island and spreading. We were set to work a mile back from its edge. The plan was to widen roughly with our axes a narrow partly-cleared trail that ran approximately clear round the fire, and then to set a carefully-watched, slow burning, back-fire to work its way against the wind burning up the light dry brush and more inflammable timber. This would force the other on-rushing flames driven by the wind to die down for lack of unburnt trees. We had no water to use on the fire. Even if this had been handy it would have been of little avail against a strong wind. So we fought fire with fire, relying on axes and shovels as our tools, praying that the wind would change or die down, or that rain would come.

For nearly a week we slaved in the heat and smoke at what seemed sometimes childishly inadequate work. Twice our back-fire itself jumped back across our safety zone and there had to be an exhausting rush through entangling brush to corral it again. We would try to smother it with dirt if it had not only into the moss, or if worse we would mass our men on the job of falling trees and slashing brush around it so that we could safely back-fire again on our run-away. I was on the night shift and twice we were

called from our sleep to work half the day in such an emergency. It was a trying week.

The sights and sounds of the fire were alarming, but as a spectacle, especially after dark, it was magnificent. To view those stately resin-filled trees burning, when the smoke cleared sufficiently for you to see them with your smarting, tear-dimmed eyes, was an awesome and thrilling sight. Some of the great firs were feathered with flame a yard long on the leeward side up their whole length, others flared only at their tops like torches, others again were like round pillars of fire. To see one of these fall its full hundred and fifty foot length, slowly at first, then hissing and roaring and, with thunderous sound and showers of sparks, crash to the ground, was unforgettable.

The sky above the miles of burning forest was lighted with a rosy light across which drifted clouds of luminous smoke. There was always the angry sound of wind and fire, but sometimes it would suddenly increase in intensity and then you would feel its whole terrifying, devastating power swooping down to destroy you. There would be an inward battle against being stampeded into running for your life.

During the first days many terrified deer would cross our line, their natural caution and shyness thrown aside to escape from the fire. No doubt many others, beast and bird, were encircled and killed where the heat or flames had cut off their way of escape.

Seven days this wearisome fight continued. Back in our hearts were thoughts of a little homestead where the toilsome work of years was imperilled, or graver thoughts of the risk to loved ones at home alone. One week of this scorching, smoke-choking experience, and then the wind died down.

In a day or two it changed and began to blow hard the other way. Our slow back-fires now gathered speed and soon they were sweeping down with all-conquering power upon the great burning tract. The flames met, fought for possession of the last few yards of unburnt timber, and then they both dropped feebly down to burn about roots and stumps. At the far side of the fire with the change of wind, the flames howled their fearsome death-chant through the trees growing between them and the shore, and then they too died away at the water's edge, their sparks and fire-brands being borne by the wind into the fire-eating, scatheless ocean.

Four more days and nights we patrolled our beats with little work to do. Three night-crews used to gather to have their midnight meal together in the light of an old pitchy stump which we had let burn, for that purpose, in a safe place. We would rest for an hour after eating and then we would have an impromptu concert. Billie Gilbert and Hale would sing solos or duets, and Burditt and Nicholls would tell stories, one about his experiences in the British

navy, and the other about cowboy-life years ago in the western states. Of course we had to have for fillers, some of the latest jazz songs, also some old-fashioned "come-all-ye's" and humorous stuff, mixed with ancient bits from old school-books. Sometimes a fellow, brave in the semi-darkness, would give us *Lucy Gray, The Wreck of the Hesperus, Casabianca,* or *Curfew Shall Not Toll To-Night.* The last two weren't finished! Someone who couldn't stand it started up a chorus and overwhelmed the elocutionist. We had some fine things too. One night the choicer portions of Gray's *Elegy* were given, followed by Kipling's *Recessional* and Browning's *Prospice.* A hymn or two often seemed in order. These we all knew, they had pleasant associations, and they touched on the deeper things upon which everyone of us had sometimes pondered.

Then we would separate and spend the rest of the night in lonely, individual patrols on the trail, meeting in at each end of our beat with the sentry next us for a half-hour chat near a burning root.

It was a glad day when we were released and conveyed from the camp to Vananda and home. I was very weary. My clothing was soiled and torn. I had a ten-day's growth of beard on my face. I must have looked the conventional tramp when I entered my home yard. When my collie, Scout, first spied me in the distance he told me distinctly in dog-language,

with surly bark and raised hair, to get off the premises. Closer inspection sent him wild with joy. He nearly cracked in two in trying to express his feelings. My children hesitated a little at first to give me greeting. A refreshing bath and a good night's rest put me right again.

That night, when sleeping so soundly you would think Gabriel's Trump could scarcely rouse me, some gentler noise brought me wide awake. It was the sound of a few scattered drops of rain on the roof. I suppose longing and listening so intensely for rain those days just past, had tensed my subconscious self to alertness for such a sound. The drops were promises that had fulfilment. Before morning it was pouring. For three days it continued, soaking the scorched and smoking coast-land, its islands, valleys, and mountain-sides. When it cleared every danger was past for the summer. Although in many places deeply-hidden fires smouldered and smoked that only long heavy winter rains could extinguish, the worry was over. The air was sweet and clear, and the threat of the forest fire was gone for another year.

"Not regular mission-work," someone possibly might say. No, but the hand the missionary took in fighting that bush fire was as true a part of his ministry as the best sermon he has ever preached.

CHAPTER IV.

THE LUCKY SWEDE.

HERE at Vananda I have an illustrious neighbor, a fine old gentleman about whom much has been written. His name is Charles John Anderson. He is famous in the annals of the Klondike as the man who bought No. 29 on Eldorado Creek for eight hundred dollars and cleaned up a million out of it in three years.

A very interesting but highly-seasoned account of his Yukon adventures has for long been currently accepted as true. I have even heard Klondikers telling the story with great gusto. But as a rule when it came to a show-down these story-tellers were found to be men who had come to the North in later years, had no acquaintance with Anderson, wouldn't know him if they saw him, and had absolutely no first-hand knowledge of the matter.

I want to give an outline of that libellous story in order to get a right chance to cleanse it from the slander it contains against a good man. All the same it's a rare yarn! Here it is:

In the autumn of 1896 in the far lonely Northland, three men with dog-team arrived in the Forty Mile camp. They had come from the Klondike River

watershed, and had had a risky 50-mile journey down the fast freezing Yukon. There was no Dawson then and these men had travelled to Forty Mile to record a claim they had staked in partnership on Eldorado. This creek was tributary to Bonanza on which Carmack had found very rich pay. Most of the two or three hundred men then in the wilds of the Yukon had staked ground up and down stream from discovery claim on Bonanza. Some were too late in getting word of the strike and so couldn't get a claim on that creek near enough to Carmack's to seem worth recording. Therefore a few of these men staked on this adjacent wide-valleyed tributary and modestly called it Eldorado Creek. No one had done any prospecting on Eldorado except a hasty pan or two at the rim-rock which showed "colors," but then you could find colors almost anywhere in the 2000-mile Yukon Valley. Eldorado was so wide that it looked more like a moose-pasture than a gulch. A paystreak so spread out meant that there would be too much dirt mixed with the gold to make it pay.

So our friends wanted to sell the claim they had staked in that ill-looking valley. But among the half-hundred miners at Forty Mile they had difficulty in finding a purchaser. They learned at last about a young Swede named Charlie Anderson who might be an easy mark if they got him drunk. Charlie had some money and would usually agree to anything if

under the influence of liquor. The affair was easily managed and worked out beautifully. Acquaintance was formed and a few drinks followed. The subject of a sale was broached and after some urging and some more booze the papers were signed up and Charlie passed over his eight hundred dollars. For that evening everybody was happy. Next morning the victim wakened with a sore head, an almost empty poke, and transfer papers giving him exclusive title to Claim 29 on Eldorado. At the roadhouse bar he wept useless tears when the bartender told him that everything was in good legal form and he had no come-back. "Vell, vell," he said, "I tank I just hev to go and inspact my no-good claim."

When the Yukon was safely frozen he shouldered his pack and mushed away over the ice to the Klondike River, then along its shores to Bonanza and up Bonanza to Elorado to "inspact" his claim. He had, of course, the necessary shovel, pick, gold-pan, and some grub. Those he conversed with on Bonanza laughed at him as a simpleton. He admitted that he had easily been made a fool of but he was going to prospect his claim anyway. In mining there is always the off chance.

After this the story runs rapidly and sweetly for Charlie. He commenced to dig and found gravel three or four feet below the surface. It held colors, good colors. He went on through a yard or so of gravel

into the loose broken-up bedrock and there he found phenomenal pay, some of it in piles of nuggets.

He lost his head. He put on a foreman with a crew of men to work the ground. He came around only at clean-up times to get his gold. Otherwise his nights and days were spent in riotous living. He now became known as "The Lucky Swede." By the summer of 1897 crowds commenced to come north from the outside world, and Dawson, a tent city at first, came into existence in a month or two, soon having a population of about 15,000 excited people. Bonanza and Eldorado commenced to pour out immense treasures, and then other creeks in other near-by valleys were opened up and found to be rich. Now that gold was plentiful, conditions of life easier, and the camp booming, the usual beasts of prey appeared on the scene. Crooked card-sharpers, prostitutes and other forms of grafters, who live by encouraging and commercializing the frailties of sins of humanity, came in great numbers. Our friend Charlie was their Bonanza. The gamblers, the dance-halls, the bars, and "the girls" got many ounces of his dust. He was simple enough even when sober and he was now rarely sober. As time went on one of the dance-hall women showed signs of planning to make pretense of falling in love with Charlie, preparatory to actually marrying him. Then she would carry off "the goose that laid the golden egg" and have a monopoly! This raised a storm of

protest from the others. It was finally agreed that his special favorites among these female vultures should play a game of poker with the Lucky Swede as the stakes. Charlie consented and watched the game to see that there was no dealing from the bottom of the pack!

He took the winner out to San Francisco where they were married. He gave her her weight in gold, presumably about $36,000, as a wedding present. He bought and furnished a lovely home for her in Seattle and showered expensive gifts upon her. The rest of his money he invested in San Francisco real estate such as hotels and apartment-houses. The woman, of course, divorced him after she got all she could. Charlie took it to heart and decided to turn over a new leaf and live clean. Then the undreamed of happened. When the Lucky Swede turned good his luck turned bad. In 1905 the terrible San Francisco earthquake and fire smashed up or burned up all his property and left him almost penniless. He came North to Vancouver, drifting about in British Columbia, until at last he has cast anchor in a little shack at Vananda. He takes an odd job or an odd drink when he can get it, an outstanding illustration of the proverb about a fool and his money.

There you have the spicy tale. It is too bad to spoil a good story but fair-play demands the statement that the raciest parts are rank untruths. Now I

shall give you the actual facts. They are I think of more real interest than the garbled story I have told. You can make your own corrections, and muse meanwhile upon the creative imagination and tough conscience of the man who first wrote up the story of the Lucky Swede.

* * * * *

Charles John Anderson was born in Sweden, June 2nd, 1859. He came to America in 1887, landing at New York. In 1890 he went west to Tacoma. There he heard stories about placer gold being found in paying quantities in the Yukon River valley. In 1893 he and a party of eight others went north by boat the thousand miles to Dyea in Alaska, thence on foot over the Chilkoot Pass, and down the Yukon River four hundred miles to Forty Mile. This Canadian town was then the principal old camp in the North and boasted a government mining-recorder, a store, and a roadhouse or two. There were then perhaps three hundred men, other than Indians, in the whole North, mostly gold miners.

About this time four men, partners, were working a claim on Glacier Creek near Forty Mile. They were Fred Hutchinson, an Englishman; Lars Langlow, a Norwegian; Constantine Komentaros, a Greek; and Kotar Petros Boyhepapa, an Arab. The Arab was accidentally drowned that year. Anderson offered to

buy his share in the partnership and his offer was accepted. They worked together until 1896. In the late summer of that year they heard that George Carmack, a squaw-man, had found unusually good prospects on Rabbit Creek (later called Bonanza) a tributary of the Klondike. They paid little attention to this report at first. "Just a dodge of Siwash George to get someone to give him a winter's grubstake!" they said. But a miner came along who had seen some of the gold that Carmack had found and gave details, the true ones, of the now historical event.

Carmack and his Indians had been fishing salmon at the mouth of the Klondike and after a week or two of that they decided to go back into the hills for moose. The first day out they camped for the noon meal in the creek valley. Skookum Jim, an Indian, went across to the other bank to get some clean water for cooking. He picked a spot, free from vegetation, where the creek was running over a rocky ledge. He leaned over resting one hand on a projecting stone and dipped his pail into the water. Stretched out with his face near the stream he saw the sheen of gold under water in a crevice of the rock. He set the pail aside and investigated. He found a rich little nest of nuggets. He shouted to the others to bring the shovel and gold pan. Carmack then began to dig and pan near the rim of rock and got surprising results. Needless to tell the moose hunt was abandoned, discovery

posts were hewed off and marked, and all speed was made down stream to Forty Mile to put their claims on record.

Anderson and his party, when they heard this well-authenticated story, decided to go across to the new find and put in their stakes. But they delayed their trip until they had first shovelled in and cleaned up a portion of their round which they had "stripped" and thawed. Otherwise the work of preparation would all have to be repeated in the spring, for the winter was at hand when everything would freeze solid. So they took two or three weeks to complete their work and then a party of a dozen or so started across the Yukon hills in the directed of the Klondike.

When they got to Bonanza they found they had delayed too long. Everything on that creek, reasonably near "discovery," was taken. Even Eldorado, a broad valley tributary to Bonanza, had been staked to its source. The Anderson party then heard from some Indians that there was gold on a creek some miles away and it was so rich that they called it "Too Much Gold" Creek. So the stampeders picked up their packs again and some of them started over the hills towards the creek with the alluring name. But on the summit, a day or two on the way, the first heavy snows of the winter caught them and for three days they couldn't move camp. A howling storm held them fast and when it cleared two feet of snow had fallen and trails

were obliterated. They determined to abandon the trip into unknown country and head for winter quarters at Forty Mile. Slush was running in the Yukon and ice forming along the edge. The party, now only numbering two or three, had a nasty time of it before they reached their destination.

About the same time three other men came into camp named Winfred Olar, Al. Parks, and Al. Fair. They had staked No. 29 on Eldorado but wanted to sell it. Charlie Anderson heard of this and figured that he would take a chance and buy it if the price were not too high. He had left seven thousand dollars in gold cached under the floor of his cabin on Glacier Creek. It was all but impossible to get up to it until the rivers froze. So he went to Mr. Wilson, the manager of the local branch store of the Alaska Commercial Co., and asked him if he could have the loan, if necessary, of perhaps two thousand dollars. Wilson said he could have any amount within reason. With this backing Charlie now sought the Eldorado men and asked them terms. They wanted twelve hundred dollars, six hundred cash and six hundred "on bedrock." Anderson offered eight hundred in cash for a quit-claim deed. The offer was accepted and they arranged to meet at 10 o'clock next morning in the Alaska Commercial Company's office to make the transfer. There, the next day, the deal was closed and the borrowed gold was handed over.

When the rivers were fit for travel Anderson went up to Glacier, got his money, and came back and paid Wilson. Then with pack on back he struck out for Eldorado up the now frozen Yukon to prospect his new ground. Christmas Eve 1896 he camped for the first time on his claim. By the end of January 1897 his prospecting had proved the ground to be fabulously rich. When spring came he put on a crew of men, paid them the highest wages ever regularly paid in the North, and managed the workings himself. He was too busy to become a patron of the dance-halls or gaming tables had he so desired. Instead of being a drunken, sensual simpleton, as the usual story pictures him, he was the very opposite. He has never danced at all since he left Sweden. He has never played a game of cards for money in his life, and if everybody lived as Charlie Anderson lived then and lives now, one distillery would do for the North American continent, and there would be no houses of ill-fame at all.

Well, he piled up a big fortune. In 1905, after nearly fourteen years in the Yukon, he went to San Francisco and invested his money in real estate. There he met and married a third-rate actress. They were extremely ill-mated. Anderson wanted a home and kiddies of his own. The woman was not that sort. They soon became divorced by mutual consent. In this marriage Charlie Anderson was strictly honor-

able and played the game with fairness and unlimited generosity.

Then followed that miracle of bad luck. The terrible earthquake and fire of 1906 destroyed in a day practically all his wealth. He came to Vancouver, worked near Sapperton in a sawmill, and during the last twenty years has labored steadily at various jobs, except when out on the hills prospecting. He is always industrious, always cheerful; his habits such as would make me, with clear conscience, recommend him for an eldership in one of our churches!

To see Anderson as I see him continually, a man of nearly seventy who looks fifteen years younger, with strong and healthy body, clear eye and steady hand, faculties unimpaired, and holding his own at hard work with young men, is to recognize the gross absurdity of the stories that picture him as having lived the life of a roué for years. Had he lived that kind of life he would now probably be dead or insane, certainly diseased and broken in health. The inescapable logic of the laws of Nature brand the slanderous stories for what they are.

Charlie wears a neat little pointed whisker. He believes he will once more strike it rich, and he told me he had vowed never to shave off his beard until fortune favors him again as in long ago Klondike days "when the world was young."

CHAPTER V.

A THIEF.

I LIKE to write about the Klondike. I was only twenty-six years old when I went in and I stayed until I was thirty-seven. During the ten years I was out only one winter, that of 1900-1901. It was a happy life for a young man. The land itself was new and interesting, the amazing gold discoveries made life intense and romantic, and there were many thousands of men from all parts of the world to keep you from loneliness. But much has been written by others about those days and I am going to tell you only a little, personal story. You may enjoy the story and you may be able to sense something of the spell of the Yukon in the background.

I lived alone, in a small log-cabin, twenty miles back of Dawson, at the foot of the mountains, where Gold Bottom Creek enters Hunker. With that as my headquarters I "mushed" around the outlying creeks within a radius of fifty miles, among them Dominion, Gold Run, All Gold, Too Much Gold, Sulphur, Eureka, Black Hills, Henderson, and, on occasion visiting Duncan and Lightning Creeks back in the mountains, 200 miles away.

A THIEF

On the Hunker divide there were perhaps 3000 men, mining along Hunker, Gold Bottom and Last Chance Creeks and on the benches adjacent. I tried to be a friend to all but of course groups of younger men of similar tastes would naturally be formed as inner circles of friendship. So I had some special "tillicums," young fellows like myself, who got together whenever we could and usually knocked around together. In our bunch there was Ashby Peppard, Harry McCrimmon, Ed. Blanchfield, Joy and Ryan of the Mounted Police, Jack Black, Bill Lennox, Ballentine, Bob Fortune and a number of others. It is around the last-named man that this story centres.

Fortune had been a professional boxer in England and was an expert in the manly art. One of our favorite diversions of an evening in winter was to go over to Jimmie Gordon's roadhouse, move the tables back, and have a series of boxing and wrestling bouts among our gang. Bob could give us all pointers. He was a true sport, never took unfair advantage of an opponent, never used his superior training to humiliate his unskilled antagonist. Indeed he was one of the finest young gentlemen you would care to meet in the ring or out of it. Honest as the sun, generous without limit, clean of life and speech, no wonder we all had a deep admiration and regard for him. Fortune had one strange and serious defect that we all deplored. Once or twice he had got drunk and then

we had seen a ghastly change come over our hero. He became, seemingly, possessed of a devil. He sought for fights in the roadhouses, and once into one he used any kind of dirty trick to smash up the other fellow. He would sneak behind an unsuspecting man, friend or foe, and enjoy knocking him down without warning. He very rarely went on a spree, but when he did everybody who knew his vicious bent would keep out of his way.

One evening towards the end of March there came a knock at the door of my cabin, and Jack Black came in. He had a face as long as your arm which told me, before he spoke, that something was wrong. "Bob Fortune is on the rampage," he said, "he had his first clean-up on the claim the other day and came down to-night with a poke of dust and he's spending it on hootch." "Well," I replied, "I'm dreadfully sorry, but I don't care to mix in. The best thing to do is for all hands to steer clear of him until he empties his poke." "But, George," he said, "it's more serious than that. He's down in Lareau's roadhouse right now and he's had a big fight there. There are two fellows on the floor knocked out. Everybody has left the bar and Lareau has sent word to the police. He is sore and mad to think that the other roadhouses are getting all the money because of Fortune. The gang ought to do something." I could see then that indeed we must do something to keep Fortune from getting

into the hands of the police. It would mean a jail sentence and that would be a tragedy. Fortune wasn't that kind of man. It would give him a wrong label for the rest of his life. It was a nasty job to tackle but someone of our party must make the attempt. Black had a look on his face which plainly said, "Let George do it!" and that's my name! No time was to be lost. I knew Sergeant Joy would give our friend all the time to get away that he fairly could, but he would certainly do his duty. I told Black to keep out of sight, not to mix in at all, and I'd do my best.

I went across the creek and down to Lareau's. When I opened the bar-room door a strange sight met my eyes. It was both disgusting and humorous. In the centre of the foul-smelling dirty-floored room stood Fortune. He was reeling a little, his face was cut and bruised and bloody, and he had an empty whisky bottle in his hand. On the floor lay two fellows drunk and battered up. Behind the bar I could see the top of a man's head. It was Lareau playing safe. The men raised themselves to look, drunkenly, when I came in. Fortune swung the bottle and in raucous voice shouted "Down!" and down they went! Lareau's head also showed clear above the bar as he looked with angry eyes towards me. Fortune turned to him and with an ugly smile ordered him down. The order was promptly obeyed and Lareau's head disappeared.

Fortune then noticed me. My plan was to get him out of that roadhouse immediately and over to my cabin where he would be "in sanctuary." Any moment the police might come and that would settle it the wrong way for my friend. I decided to try coaxing first. If he showed signs of acting ugly, to rush him and get him away by force provided he didn't put me out of business first.

As Fortune looked at me I could see in his eyes the fiend and friend fighting for control. Of course I smiled my nicest smile and said in my sweetest tones, "Hello, Bob, I've been looking for you. Come on over to my cabin." Luck favored me. A friendly smile replaced the leer, and he said, "All right, Georgie boy; I guess I've done pretty well for one night. Been teaching school here. Got them all to be good little boys. Do what I tell them right away." Then he came over to the door, but just before he reached it he turned quickly to the bar. Lareau, thinking the game was over, was standing up. Fortune roared "Down!" and hurled the bottle at him. Lareau went down so fast he struck his chin a nasty blow on the bar and collapsed on the floor out of sight! We got right away across to my cabin. Going over, Fortune kept muttering about "looking for a fellow that he wanted to fix;" some man he had known in England that had "done him a dirty trick there." Heard he had come to the Yukon, was on Hunker, and wanted

to "square things" with him. Lareau and the others were only unimportant incidents in his search for the real victim. I got him to lie down on my bunk for I saw he was drowsy. He stretched out on his back. The cabin was warm and he was soon asleep. I gave him a shake or two to make sure he was really unconscious. Then I rolled him over on his side, found his poke, a leather pocket-poke containing about two hundred dollars in gold-dust, and extracted it carefully from his hip-pocket and put it in mine. I was just going to let him roll back when I noticed a gun in his other pocket. I stole that too. Then I put him in a comfortable position, took off his shoes, and covered him with a light blanket. It was a risky bit of thievery. If he had wakened and caught me at it, I probably would be playing a harp instead of writing these lines! I left a bottle with an inch of whisky in it near the bed. He would need it badly to ease things for him in the morning. I stoked the stove and closed the dampers, blew out the candle, and slipped away.

I went to the Mounted Police barracks, saw Joy and fixed things with him. Then I called in a each of the half-dozen road-houses and asked them not to sell Fortune any booze unless he had the dust. It was hardly necessary to do this because it was, I knew, a point of honor with Fortune never to drink on credit. But I wanted to make sure. He'd be dead to the

world until to-morrow. But then the pangs of compulsory sobering up might be too much for his principles. Bill Lennox said he would arrange about meals.

I next hit the trail for Last Chance Creek, six miles down the valley, and there I hid away in Ed. Blanchfield's cabin. I stayed there for a day or two when I got word that Fortune was back on his claim. I went straight up Hunker to his location. From the trail I could see him at work on the windlass, hoisting the pay-dirt, which had been placed in the wooden bucket by the man down below. I called out to him from a safe distance! He gave me a wave to come over. He came down and met me with cordial words. "I've got something of yours here, Bob," I said, and handed him his poke. He tried to shove it back into my hand, but I wouldn't take it. "Wish you'd keep it, old fellow," he said, "you never did a finer Christian thing in your life than when you pinched my poke and gun that night. There is a man in the North that I have a grudge against and I intended to kill him. I was crazy. I see now what a terrible fool I was and I'm done with the booze. It's going to get me hanged if I don't quit it. I wish you'd take the money, George, you've earned it a hundred times over, and I'm grateful." "No," I said, "I can't take it. Any friend would have done what I did." Then I handed him the gun, and, with scarcely a look at it, he

chucked it into a water-filled shaft where it sank down out of sight.

There's a sequel to it all. Next Sunday night I held service in Gordon's roadhouse. At the close Bill Lennox and two other men, my "finance committee," were exclaiming over the collection. They showed me with pleasure a poke that had been put in the hat. I recognized it as Fortune's poke, and asked Lennox to please give it back to Fortune, telling him the story. "Nothing doing," said Bill, "this poke has been put into the collection by its owner. It belongs to the committee and we're not going to let the preacher steal it again! No, sir, this money will buy a nice little folding-organ for our meetings. We need one badly to get those hymns started low enough for us fellows! That's what we're going to do with it. Neither you nor Fortune will ever see it again!"

Bill and his committee had their way!

CHAPTER VI.

A CANADIAN LAD.

AFTER the Armistice I was on duty for seven months as Chaplain on the Canadian Hospital Ship *Araguaya*. She was a ten-thousand-ton steamboat belonging to the Royal Mail Steam Packet Line, run by their own regular crew, but carrying a Canadian Hospital Unit consisting of a dozen doctors and nurses and a full complement of other ranks.

Our job was to convey wounded soldiers back to Canada. We made eight round trips that winter and spring, taking eight hundred home each time. This number was, roughly speaking, made up of two hundred in the Amputation Ward (otherwise known as Ward "B"). one hundred Mental cases, fifty men sick with lung or other organic trouble usually caused by poison-gas, and the rest, in pretty fair shape physically, known as walking-wounded, and sleeping in ordinary steerage berths. One trip in the spring we carried a number of men who were known to be dying. It was hoped they would get home to their friends before the end came. Most of them did. Three we buried at sea.

In some ways my spell on the *Araguaya* was the cushiest job I've ever had in my life. I occupied a

fine stateroom that had been one of a suite occupied by the Crown Prince Wilhelm of Germany at the time of the opening of the Kiel Canal when this boat had been loaned by the British Government to the Kaiser and his party for their private use. It was so much more pleasant than life in the dug-outs and the trenches with their discomfort, misery, danger and bloodshed. I had here a real bed in a dainty room with tapestried walls and carpeted floors. I had, of course, a military servant or "batman" who cleaned my uniform, buttons, buckles, and shoes, and ran my errands. But in addition I had a ship's steward, a man of about 35 years of age, who made my bed, cleaned my room, prepared my baths of hot, cold, salt or fresh water, and did everything he could to make me comfortable. In the morning he wakened me in time to bath and dress for breakfast, bringing me a cup of tea and a piece or two of buttered toast. Indeed I am sure if I had asked him to tuck me in, hear me say my prayers, and kiss me good night, he would have done it!

Although there was complete lack of physical hardship, apart from an occasional winter storm, yet the life was very interesting and full of human color. The crew, from skipper to stokers, could tell yarns of strange adventure and queer incident. Several of the men had been on boats that had been torpedoed, yet there they were doing their work with unshaken nerve, some of them deep down in the hold of the

boat. I recollect one of them, an Englishman from the north countries, named Bottomley, who had a wonderful falsetto tenor voice. I have never heard its equal of that sort. At our concerts, usually three every trip west, the audience always clamored for Bottomley once his talent became known to each new ship-load of patients. Indeed they would have been content to divide the whole evening between him and one other, the Canadian lad who is the hero of my little story.

His name was—well, Macdonald will do. It was a name of that sort. One with a great tradition behind it, a symbol implying that the man bearing the name ought to have good stuff in him. Whether or not this young fellow was worthy of an honorable name, you must judge for yourselves. He had curly red hair and a healthy complexion. His youth and length of service showed that he must have overstated his age when he enlisted, "lied like a gentleman," as we used to say. He had both legs off close up to his body, otherwise he was sound and strong. A happy youngster, he was the life of the Amputation Ward and soon became known all through the ship. He had quite a good, rollicking voice and liked to sing. Also he could play the piano. His taste in instrumental music ran pretty much to jazz which was then coming into vogue, but he could play some better stuff and

sing some nice songs too. Concert night he, of course, would be one of the headliners on the programme. He had a mate in the ward who had lost an arm but had both legs. This friend would take Macdonald on his back and carry him down the steps to "H" Mess where he held our affairs. There he would be placed in an ordinary chair with a back, a cushion on it, and a strap or two put round his body to hold him securely in his seat. He would be put in front of the piano, introduced by the the chairman, and do his "stunt." Whether he sang or played it made no difference to the crowd. He would have to give at least a half-dozen encores. Indeed it was only consideration for the feelings of the other performers, Macdonald's final refusal to do any more, and the chairman's assertion of authority that kept the encores down to that number. We put Macdonald at the beginning and Bottomley at the end. That was the only way to handle it. If we brought them both on consecutively, at the beginning, none of the other talent would likely have had a chance.

One day, wet and windy outside, down in "B" ward the patients had the phonograph going. Very few were absent from the ward for even those who could hobble about felt more comfortable where they were warm and sheltered. A slippery, heaving deck is no place for cripples. So the best thing was to stay indoors and have a game of cards, or "Housie," read

a book, or listen to the phonograph. I happened along while they were playing that old song *When You Come to the End of a Perfect Day.* When the music finished, Macdonald, near whom I had been standing, said "Sir, I have been thinking that now someone should write another piece and call it, *When You Come to the End of a Perfect War.* Just to kill time, I've figured out the different ideas each verse should carry. The first verse should say the war was perfect because *we have fought for the Right.*" His judgment was sound. If there is any vindication of any war, in which any man can voluntarily take part with clear conscience, it must be found in the righteousness of the Cause for which he fights. In the last war we may have had mixed motives as individuals, but Britain and her Allies could never have gathered and maintained an army sufficiently powerful, in numbers, loyalty, or morale, to be victorious, if their efforts had not met with the continued moral approval of those who had to do the fighting.

"Then," he said, "the second verse might claim this as a perfect war because *we have done our duty.*" Of course a man may do his duty and not suffer at all in the doing of it, but Macdonald was only a boy and both legs were off, so that somehow you felt he had a peculiar right to talk about doing one's duty. That you couldn't think of it as a perfect war for you if you had failed to do your "bit."

"The third verse should be," he continued, "that we have come to the end of a perfect war because *we have won the victory.*" And it is a tremendously satisfying thought that the decision in the contest of armed force is ours, a necessary ending, for us at least, of a perfect war. Indeed I think the common people of Germany are commencing to realize that fortune favored them as well as us in their defeat. One shudders to think what might have been happening in the western world, and the eastern too, if German militarism had had its way.

"But what will you have as the chorus, or do you want a chorus?" I said. "Yes," he answered, "I've got that doped out too. The chorus should be something about it being the end of a perfect war because *we're on our way home to dear old Canada.* That's the best idea of all and if it's in the chorus we'd get a chance to sing it after every verse!" Whatever the men who were listening might have thought about the verses, they were all agreed on the chorus. They had grown fearfully homesick in those weary years of war. The novelty had worn off in the first few weeks, and, though they had never failed to do their full duty on the field of battle, yet, for many months, they had been longing to be through with it all, and get back home again and see father, mother, and other loved ones in the old home-town. The ward was pleasant, the food was good, the ship was seaworthy

and steady, but the best thing of all was that we were headed west and Canada was our destination.

In mid-ocean we ran into heavy weather. One morning we wakened to find our good ship fighting a battle with a strong head wind. The storm increased all day. By nightfall a very bad sea was running, and the wind had developed into a real gale. Everything was battened down close. We had lost a boat. Part of the rail and deck-rigging had been carried away. The hurricane was driving us back. The engines were running dead slow for, if we had attempted to drive into the great waves, our decks would have been swept clean and the ship, no doubt, would have gone down. All Captain Barrett tried to do was to keep her head into the storm. This was managed by running one propeller faster than the other on whichever side it was needed.

So you can imagine we were having an extremely unpleasant time between decks. Many of the men were seasick, some had been hurt, thrown out of their berths or injured otherwise by the fearful rolling and plunging of the ship. I scrambled around the wards in the evening trying to cheer the fellows, although I fear my efforts were of little use. We were in real danger. I knew the ship's officers were worried. To landsmen, and few of our patients knew much about the sea, the thunder of the waves over and around us, and the terrible tossing of the ship, was most alarming. Some

of the mental cases lost their nerve altogether, hundreds of the patients and many of the staff became violently ill. In "B" ward, where the patients were more helpless, a number of men of the crew and staff had been detailed to help these cripples to stay in their cots. When I entered that ward it looked pretty bad. So many of them were seasick and some had been injured. The floor would try to take the place of the wall and become a slippery slope, continually shifting its angle. The roar of the waves was so loud you had to shout to make yourself heard. I crept along by the wall, sometimes holding on with my full weight to the rail, sometimes thrown against it.

I saw Macdonald hanging on with both hands to the steel support-rod over his cot, his poor stumps swinging out to left and right with the swaying of the boat. It seemed pitiful. I worked my way along near him and, with a sickly grin intended for encouragement, called out to him, "Hello, Mac, how are you getting along?" "Well, Padre," he shouted back in a voice you could hear all over the ward, "It's pretty bad but it might be worse. Anyway, I surely can't kick!" Macdonald's brave jest at his own expense, brought a smile, a real smile, to our faces and cheered us up when we needed it badly.

"Here's to you, Canadian lad. You're great stuff! Your body may be badly crippled, but not your soul. It is straight, strong and noble. God bless you wherever you are!"

Believe it or not, but it is true, that after Macdonald's joke, the storm commenced to abate. It seemed an appropriate coincidence. By midnight the wind had almost gone. By morning we were running again through long and easy swells that soon died away to a quiet sea.

CHAPTER VII.

A LANG BAY STORM.

IT WAS in 1920 while taking post-graduate work in Edinburgh that I received an urgent request from the Presbyterian Church in Canada, to come back to Vancouver and take charge of their loggers' Mission.

October 1st. of that year found me in Vancouver on the job. The Home Mission committee had only very hazy ideas about the extent and nature of the Mission, but if they knew little, I knew less. "Your field," they told me, "commences about forty miles out from Vancouver. Welcome Pass will be your southern boundary and you can go on from there visiting people and camps on the mainland, its islands and inlets, as far as you think it wise to go, observing the courtesies where other churches are working." Then they turned me loose on the Pacific with an ancient and leaky gasoline launch called *Mina W.* The boat was poorly engined and my helper was a young man who knew nothing much about coastal waters and had had a nervous break-down a few months before!

On the bleak December morning we chugged out through the Lion's Gate into the Gulf of Georgia on

what was for me an exploring trip in the fullest sense of the term. For three months we roamed around in our unseaworthy tub. That four-hundred mile tour during those winter months with short dark days, storms of wind and blinding snow, travelling often amid confusing fogs, tumultuous, eddying tide-rips and dangerous reefs, filled in the meagre knowledge I had of my parish with a wealth of memorable detail and vivid coloring.

I've tried to buck a wild sou'-easter in Malaspina Strait with a hesitating engine and a damaged shaft, the waves seemed to go clear over us every time we hit one. I've tried to find my way into Secret Cove in pitch dark, low tide, not a light to be seen, and a storm knocking us about. I have had to walk a loose boom of floating logs at night in Topaz Harbour with snow on them and no "calks" in my boots. These and countless other such experiences during eight years of almost ceaseless going have given me a knowledge of my section of the coast, its tides, winds, little "harbours," and its people, that no book or second-hand instruction could ever afford. My "mate" left after six weeks of it. His nerves were again giving way! I took on a young up-coast lad, Lester Price, a returned soldier who, with his brother Ross, and now Oswald Treloar, a young logger hurt at the Still-water Camp and needing easier work, have, in succession, been good comrades and loyal helpers these years.

A LANG BAY STORM

During the first year I had cold feet, literally and figuratively, many times. I would have quit the job on a dozen occasions if I had been able to do so honorably. But I stuck it. After the first year I became better acquainted with people and conditions. When my new boat, the Sky Pilot, was given me it was relatively plain sailing.

I cannot recall a more terrifying hour in all my life than that I spent in the tall timbers the evening of Saturday, January 29th, 1921, at the Lang Bay settlement. Six of us from the shingle-bolt camp at Lamb's old breakwater were walking the mile through the tall timber to Smith's little store, where I was to have service, when the worst gale in the history of the coast tore down on us in howling fury. Our lanterns were blown out. One man luckily had an electric flashlight. There was no shelter from the broken-off limbs and branches that hurtled past us in the darkness.

Then the big trees themselves commenced to fall, crashing down, here and there, on all sides of us. If there had been a good deep dug-out anywhere near I'd have headed into it like a scared rabbit, but there was nothing for it but to stagger along the narrow trail through the mud hoping our luck would hold. The noise was deafening. We had to shout into one another's ears to make ourselves heard. We had several narrow escapes before we emerged into Smith's cleared acre.

Once a cracking, swishing noise louder and nearer than the others stampeded us into a run. It was a big fellow coming down right on top of us. When it had crashed we gathered into a panting group to get our breath, and were horrified to find that one of us, the man with the light, was missing. We started to find him and help him if he were not past help, when, to our infinite relief, we saw the gleam of his torch as he crawled over the trunk and through the limbs of the fallen colossus. He, too, had sensed danger and had run back in time, escaping with only a cut or two on his head. In our race Harry Lane had tripped over a root, fallen, and broken his wrist.

We were thankful to get into Smith's little frame house where we were reasonably safe, although the gale shook the building, whistling through the cracks between the boards in its unfinished walls.

A score had gathered, and we decided to have our preaching anyway. We all felt, I think, that a service of prayer, (at least), would be very much in order just then. We went into the dining room as the kitchen was too crowded. Unfortunately the dining room was on the winward side of the house. I have never in all my travels had the peculiar occurrences happen around me that we had happen that night. I stood near the window with my back to the storm, with a table and lamp in front of me. My audience sat on benches against the opposite wall. I announced

a hymn. We were just getting the quavers out of our voices when the window, insecurely fastened, tumbled in on my back, the lamp blew out, and the table was knocked over. The window was held firmly against my back by the force of the wind long enough for someone to relieve me of my unusual burden, before it would break. Well, it took us fifteen minutes to get the window safely nailed back, a proceeding to which I gave personal attention, and things in order again. I commenced my sermon intending, you may be sure, to make it short. I was somewhere in "secondly" when a wild blast started the paper coming down off the top of the wall over the people's heads. It was building-paper, loosely tacked on in strips from ceiling to floor. Another gust and down it came completely covering up my congregation. I stopped preaching then and there. It was a most disconcerting and laughable sight to see your congregation disappear before your eyes that way, and then, with astonished faces, work their way out from under the paper into view again.

I rather feel like boasting about this. I've heard of orators shaking the house, rattling the windows, and other such things, but I had never heard of any preaching that would bring the windows in, put the lights out, and take the paper off the wall!

There was a good deal of confusion until we got squared away at the task of putting the paper back

in place again. We had things ship-shape at last, but I didn't attempt to finish the sermon. It was too hard to concentrate and my congregation had become "jumpy." So we closed our strenuous meeting with the "first and last" verses of *For Those in Peril on the Sea*. Then we went into the kitchen. There it was cosy, quieter and safer, being on the lee-side of the house. Mrs. Smith prepared a nice little supper for us all. We stayed and chatted until nearly midnight. The storm had died away and we left for home. On my way down to the breakwater I counted up to thirty great trees that had fallen across our trail in four hours, over or under whose trunks I had to climb. I went down the long sandspit in the shelter of which I had left my boat tied to a standing boom. The wintry sea was still in turmoil and the chilly spray soaken me to the skin. But I couldn't find any trace of my boat and the boom was gone. Far across the bay through the night I could see a little light twinkling, the only one in the darkness. I came back to the main shore and went around, a toilsome journey, to the other side! There I found the *Mina W.* high on the sands, resting on an even keel, with the waves barely touching her hull! The boom had broken, my man told me, and the boat had been driven like a leaf to the far shore and forced up by the wind on the extremely high tide until she stranded a few feet from Bill Mullin's shack.

It took us ten days shovelling at low water, with half a dozen men assisting, before we had a basin in which she floated at high tide and a little canal dug so that we could pull her to deep water without opening her seams.

That stormy night, millions of feet of standing timber were blown down at Lang Bay alone. Two years afterwards a forest-fire started amongst it, a strong westerly carried the devouring flames at a terrific pace through the dry brush and trees nicely laid by the gale so as to give the fire free course. The settlement was all but wiped out. Most of the settlers lost everything. They were forced to take to the sea to save their lives, some in small boats, but many had time only to wade far out and wait there for hours until the fierce heat abated or a boat came.

The heat was so intense that driftwood, washed up by the tide, took fire. The upper surface of a log would be aflame and the underside wet with the lapping waves.

A day or two after the fire I saw many logs on the beach charred on one side and untouched on the other.

Smith's house, store, and outbuildings were burnt to the ground. He has bravely re-built. One winter evening in 1925, I had service in the new schoolhouse, and, as it was near the anniversary of the gale, I told my congregation that I was going to preach

from the same text I had used the historic night of the great storm, and that I hoped to finish my sermon this time without interruption, and so I did.

CHAPTER VIII.

LASQUETIANS.

LASQUETI ISLAND, ten miles long and four miles wide, lies out in the Gulf of Georgia forty miles west from Vancouver. It is a typical British Columbia island, mountainous and covered with a jungle-like undergrowth from which rise the big trees. About a hundred and thirty people live on it, children and adults, all white except two Japanese families. Other than pack-trails it had scarcely five miles of real road when I first visited it. They had no telegraph service. I doubt if there are two shacks within sight of each other anywhere on the island. The settlers have to depend for their mail and freight upon the weekly steamboat. There is neither doctor nor nurse. It is a peculiarly detached community for one so close, comparatively, to Vancouver.

The inhabitants are among the best people I have ever met. They are neither ignorant nor benighted, not "lost souls," not unregenerate heathen, but just "folks" like you and me, influenced, of course, in character and outlook by the conditions in which they live. They are not "shut-ins" so much as "shut-outs," shut out from much of the true, beautiful and good,

in music, literature, social life, religion, and many of the common comforts and pleasures that are at hand everywhere, in a multiplicity of forms, to dwellers in modern towns and cities.

Poor in money, they are in no sense to be classed as paupers. Trail-blazers they are; pioneers, trying, with independent spirit and patient effort, to work out the problem of making homes for themselves and their families in these forests, clearing a little of the jungle away from around their shacks part of the year, and going away from home, to be absent for months, working in logging-camps to get some needed cash.

They are breaking ground, literally and figuratively, for future generations, discovering and developing resources, shaping raw material in marketable form, finding markets for their products and means of transportation for their goods to these markets. It is an isolated life for the men but doubly so for their wives. The men have more chance of intercourse with their fellows and a wider variety in their work. The women have to stay around the home-shack doing the same monotonous round of humble tasks year after year. Often they are left alone, with their little ones, night and day, months at a time while the husband is away at work in a camp. To certain temperaments it is, at last, an unbearable burden. Women in these circumstances sometimes go insane, or run away rather than lose their minds. Indeed, in some in-

stances I am amazed that the woman is able to keep sane, patient, and cheerful. Let us honor the men who have done and are doing the pioneering along the frontiers of settlement in Canada. But if we are just we shall give greater honor to the women for they have carried the heavier burden.

You will therefore readily believe that in the hearts of these settlers there is a hunger for friendship, good cheer, entertainment, and the deep-reaching comfort of the message of Jesus.

Nine years ago I made my first visit to Lasqueti. I had only been a few months on the Loggers' Mission. My time was largely spent the first year in getting acquainted with the location of the settlements and camps, scattered groups of people along six hundred miles of coast line. I was getting to know the sheltered bays and safe channels, also the rocks and reefs, tidal rapids, storms and fogs.

One Monday in September, 1921, my engineer, Price, and I set out from Vananda aboard the old mission-boat, *Mina W.*, for Lasqueti. After a seven-hour run around the head of Texada Island and down the Strait of Georgia, we were able to anchor in Tucker Bay. I went ashore to explore and spent a week going along its forest-trails and visiting the people. They gave me the astonishing information that I was the first clergyman of any sort, Catholic or Protestant, that had ever come to them. The island

had been settled for thirty years. One old man had heard tell that long ago some sort of missionary had held a meeting in a small cannery that was then running at False Bay. He didn't visit anybody and went away next day. The preacher's name wasn't known, indeed nobody was sure that the meeting had ever been held. It was a sort of legend. There were forty children on the island, probably twenty over ten years old. They had never had Sunday School, nor had they ever seen a Sunday School paper there.

As a Canadian and a minister, I felt ashamed that such conditions existed in a settlement almost within sight of one of our large cities. I forthwith arranged to hold service the next Saturday evening in the schoolhouse in the woods near Squitty Bay. This school had been started that year. The building was a small, one-roomed frame structure. Then I set out on my rounds through the settlement. It would take me the full week.

One of the first houses I called at was that of John Cooper, a married man with family. They were poor and lived in a very humble shack. I knocked at the door. Cooper opened it and asked me my business. I told him my name was Pringle and I was preacher. He stood there in surprise for a moment and then burst out with, "Did I hear you aright? Did you say 'a preacher'? Are you really an honest-to-God preacher? If you are one come right in. We're

mighty glad to see you!" He took me by the hand and pulled me into the house, took my hat and coat, and gave me a chair. He introduced me to his wife with, "Mother, shake hands with a real preacher!" They told me it was a great day for them. They had many recollections of their home-land, England, and the village chapel which they had attended long ago. They didn't ask me what church I belonged to, and hardly seemed to bother about my name, so happy were they to know I was a Christian minister. "I'm very lucky," Mrs. Cooper said, after asking me to have a cup of tea, "because I baked a cake this morning. If you had come yesterday I wouldn't have had anything special. Not that the cake is very good, but it is better than plain bread-and-butter on a unique occasion like this." I told her that I was the lucky one to get such good things to eat after a long walk.

As we chatted I noticed that there were two little children in sight, an infant in a home-made cradle and one about three years old. I asked how many they had. They told me eight, living. They had all been born without the aid of doctor or nurse. One baby boy had died shortly after birth because things hadn't gone right that time and the neighbor woman didn't know what to do. Mother had never felt quite strong since then. The six older ones were shy. They rarely saw a stranger and had vanished when I knocked. I recalled hearing a sort of scurrying noise

on entering. It was these youngsters getting out of sight. I caught them peeking around corners at me. When they became convinced that I was harmless, and influenced strongly by the chance to get a bit of cake, they came gradually out of their hiding-holes. If I had stamped my feet they would have all cleared out again, so like young wild-creatures were they. It took half-an-hour to establish intimate relations. By that time I had a lad on my knee and was delighting them all by doing some simple tricks that I had learned as a boy. I wiggled my ears, played tunes on my head, flipped coins on my wrist, swallowed fire off burning matches, juggled apples, and told riddles. It was easy to please them. They were hungry for anyone or anything to break the dull monotony of their lives. No children in town or city ever got any more fun out of Barnum and Bailey's circus than these boys and girls, and their parents too, did out of my silly nonsense. We had cleaned up half the cake when I spoke of leaving. Mrs. Cooper put the rest of it into a paper-bag for me to eat on the trail. But I was not to get away for a while yet. I noticed eight-year-old Evelyn whispering to her mother in a self-conscious way. It seems Evelyn wanted to speak a piece for me that she had learned at the school. Of course I would be delighted to hear it. It was a memorable moment for her ladyship when she stepped into the middle of the kitchen floor, made a profound bow, and announced

her recitation as, "Old Speckle." After several nervous gulps, false starts, and much bashful squirming, she proceeded thus:

Old Speckle flew from off her nest
And cackled with much vigor,
As if to say, "that egg's my best,
No hen could lay a bigger!"
But Johnnie took her down a peg,
He raised his voice to say it,
"You think you're smart! God made that egg!
You couldn't help but lay it!"

Of course there was plenty of clapping and words of appreciation which greatly pleased the dear lassie. Then Willie, nine years old, seemed to have something on his mind and confided in mother. So he was called on next. She told him to "speak out." He did, with a vengeance. He shouted out the title as "Daddy's Stick," and went at it to beat the band:

When I was a little boy, just so high,
Mother took a little stick and made me cry.
Now I'm a big boy, mother can't do it,
Daddy takes a big stick and tends right to it!

There was tumultuous applause and everybody was wonderfully happy.

Getting ready to go I told them of my plan to have service in the school on Saturday evening. Cooper and his wife rejoiced over the news and the children cried, "Goodie, goodie!" Then the man said, "That's the best news and the worst news I have heard for a

long time." Of course I asked for an explanation of the contradictory ideas. "Well," he said, "it's mighty good to think we're going to have preaching and sing some of the old hymns of long ago. I'm eager for it and so is mother, and the older children must go. But the schoolhouse is over two miles away and we have no horse. Therefore one of us will have to stay at home with the three youngest. If you put your ear to the ground after supper, Saturday, you'll hear sounds of a real squabble down our way! That will be mother and I deciding who's to stay and who's to go. You're a married man and so you know beforehand which one of us will be left at home with the kids!" I saw his point and under the joke he made of it I sensed his real disappointment. So I said, "We'll have a little taste of church right here and now, so that none of you will miss it altogether." I got out my Bible and a few hymn-books from my pack. We sang some hymns, I read a chapter, and we knelt in prayer. After that we went over to the tiny grave beneath an apple-tree in the orchard and offered another prayer. Then they all followed me to the gate and watched me out of sight, waving many farewells.

Half-an-hour brought me to Mrs. Andrews' shack. She was an elderly widow, well into her seventies, keeping house for her only son aged about thirty-five. The man had been fishing salmon for three years but

had had poor luck. His mother had come from Nanaimo to keep house for her boy. I got a hearty welcome and had to have another cup of tea. Tears came into her eyes when she heard about the preaching. She was badly crippled with rheumatism, could hardly get about her work in the house, and, of course, couldn't think of attempting the five miles to the service. I picked up her Bible, which was in plain sight on the table, and offered to read a chapter and have prayer. She was overjoyed. The book opened at the Twenty-Third Psalm. You know its lovely, comforting words beginning "The Lord in my Shepherd, I shall not want." I had barely started when she interrupted me by exclaiming, "It is strange that you should choose my favorite passage. I often read it though I know it by heart. I love that bit about 'not fearing any evil in the valley of the shadow of death' because I'll soon have to pass through that valley." There was nothing queer about my picking that chapter. When I took up the Bible I didn't know what I'd read, there are so many lovely selections, but the book fell open at the Shepherd Psalm and I chose it. The Bible had been opened there so many times that the binding had been affected and the pages parted more easily at that place. I told her not to try to kneel during the prayer. But she said it was too sacred an event for her and she wished to kneel. So her son and I helped her to her knees. It was a pain-

ful posture for her. My prayer was very brief. My heart, a full heart, was in it. I thought of my own dear mother, long dead, and if God didn't hear that prayer then He hears none of mine.

On the east shore of the island, in a very lonely cabin, I found Mr. and Mrs. Henderson, a fine, intelligent, likeable couple. She was bedfast. A year or two before she had been taken seriously ill. They should have had a doctor. But they were too poor to face the heavy expense of getting one, and too honest and proud to incur a debt they knew they couldn't pay. So they tried homely remedies. The disease got a firm hold and chronic organic trouble developed. Now Mrs. Henderson lies in the incurable ward of the Jubilee Hospital, Victoria, forced to become a charity patient when it is too late.

When are we going to lift the medical services of our land from the deplorable and odious necessity, so humiliating to the patient, of the personal money-test in times of sickness? From a humanitarian standpoint it is cruel, economically it loses the country millions of dollars in labor every year. The doctors or hospitals are not to blame. The present system, or lack of system, has become too expensive except for the rich. The ordinary married working-man cannot afford to be very long sick and yet cannot afford to die. It is high time we had some form of Government Health Insurance supported by a compulsory tax

while a man is well and working, a tax that secures to him, and his family, good, standardized treatment when sick, a decent burial at death, and protection for dependents. It must come, and soon.

Thus through the week I wandered about, visiting, getting acquainted, "ringing the Church bell;" rarely getting other than a hearty welcome. Where the welcome lacked warmth it was due to the fear that I was going to embarrass them with intimate questions about their souls, or by involving them in religious discussions. When they realized that I wasn't going to be impertinent or discourteous, things went smoothly. It was a happy, interesting week. I slept where night o'ertook me, getting always the best they had in food and shelter.

Saturday evening came at last, a nasty night, cold and stormy. As I stood at the schoolhouse door I gave up hope of having many there, the muddy trails and rain would keep most of them at home. Some were coming, however, for I could see the glimmer of lights now and then among the trees. As they came we took the lanterns and hung them from the beams. By eight o'clock we were ready to commence our meeting. I was amazed to find a schoolhouse packed full. Everybody, with two exceptions, at that end of the island, men, woman, children and babies, were there. Those absent were old Mrs. Andrews and Mrs. Henderson. It wasn't possible for them to come.

What about the Coopers? They were all there too! There is an old proverb which says, "Where there's a will there's a way," and, in this case, you might add, "Where there's a wheel there's a way." Cooper told me that until after supper Saturday there seemed no other way than that he must stay at home with the babies. Suddenly Mrs. Cooper said, "Jack, I have an idea! What about the wheelbarrow?" It was their "star of hope." He brought it up from the barn and cleaned it thoroughly. They spread newspapers in it, a quilt and pillow or two, and put the three little ones in with another quilt over them. Then he ran a rope from one handle to the other, long enough to rest on his shoulders so as to ease the weight on his hands. The procession then set out. Mrs. Cooper went ahead with the five older children, carrying the lantern to show the way, while Cooper followed pushing the wheelbarrow the two miles there and back! Absolutely true!

When I started the meeting all the little school seats and the odd bench or two were filled. At the back of the school, in the aisles, and behind me, men were sitting on blocks of wood, or piles of clothes. On the floor at my feet to the right were a number of babies on quilts. I can truthfully say that say that this was one occasion when the babies were the only ones asleep while I preached! If they wakened and needed attention their mothers would come up and

look after them. If any of them cried too loudly, I would stop speaking and we would sing a hymn softly until order was restored. To my left was the wheelbarrow parked on its side near the stove so that it would be dried out for the return journey. The light was poor. I used my flashlight to see the words when reading or singing. Yet this was one of the most remarkable meetings I have ever conducted. It had many unusual features. You and I have known of ministers who preached so long they played out their congregations, but in this case the reverse was true, the congregation tired out the preacher! I'll tell you about it in the next chapter.

CHAPTER IX.

THE MEETING AT SQUITTY BAY.

WE commenced about eight o'clock with several hymns, the old-fashioned kind. The singing went with a vim after they found their voices. We had no musical instrument from which to get the pitch. So if we started too high or two low we would go on until we grew dizzy or got bogged. Then we would all give up, have a laugh, and start over on a higher or a lower key. Of course I also read the Scriptures and prayed. But they loved to sing the old hymns. They had associations for them of other days and far-off places. I let them sometimes make their own selections. One said, "Sing *Rescue the Perishing,* it was my father's favorite." Cook, a sailor, wanted *Brightly Beams Our Father's Mercy,* and *Throw Out the Life Line.* We sang, *There are Lonely Hearts To Cherish,* and a woman asked us to sing it over again. "It's so true," she said. We sang songs for the children too. But we nearly broke down in the singing of one hymn. It starts *Hark, Hark, My Soul.* We got along with volume in the first verse, but when we came to the second the voices died

away until I was singing almost alone. I knew what was wrong. The words of the second verse are, *Far, Far Away, Like Bells At Evening Pealing.* It was memory at work. The older people were thinking of childhood homes far away, and loved ones, and the church bells, and the dear days of long ago. It brought their hearts into their throats and tears to their eyes, and so they couldn't sing.

Then I talked to them for about an hour with Jesus central in all my thoughts. I covered a great deal of ground in that address. It was September. I wouldn't get back there until the next year, and so I tried to make it a combination Armistice-Thanksgiving-Christmas-New Year's sermon! It was listened to with perfect attention. There was no unpleasant disturbance. You could hear the rain on the roof, the howl of the wind in the trees, and the distant roar of the sea. The babies, now and then, gave a little trouble. We all got a great surprise, too, when Cook struggled to his feet with a groan bringing the school-desk with him. Sitting so long, crowded into the little seat, had caused a cramp to come into his leg, and the pain had suddenly become unbearable. We got him rubbed back into shape, gave him a seat where he could stretch his legs, and then took up the story where it had been interrupted.

When I stopped speaking it was after ten o'clock. I announced a hymn and asked them to stand up to

sing it. I then pronounced the benediction intending thus to close the service. They sat down but made no move to go. I was ready to quit. I had had a tiring week, my voice was husky, and I was thoroughly weary. But I wasn't to get off so easily! Conlon stood up and said, "Mr. Pringle, we're having a feast. We're hungry for this. We're lapping it up like a starving cat does milk. Don't stop. None of us has come less than a mile. We're happy here and we want to make a night of it. Please go on. Tell us that Christmas story you mentioned, by Van Dyke, called *The Other Wise Man.* We're curious to know about it. Give us the outline. You won't be here again, you said, until after Christmas." There was a very hearty chorus of agreement and appeal. Well, they just settled back and grew quiet, so what could I do? I did my best to tell that lovely story, the finest Christmas story, outside the Bible, in the English language.

Then they stood up and we all sang a hymn, surely the closing one. I gave the benediction again. They sat down and, as before, made no move to go. It was nearly eleven o'clock, and I certainly had had enough. But again there was a request for continuance. Tiller spoke out and said, "You told us, preacher, that once long ago when you were a dog-musher in the Klondike, you took dinner, Christmas Day, in a small log cabin on the mountain-side with an old couple. You were

illustrating the truth that it isn't he size of a house or its location, or one's wealth, that makes us happy. Then you said that you afterwards went down to a roadhouse and had a wedding there. We are all just eager as wolves to hear the full story of that Christmas Day, if you will be so kind." As before, enthusiastic approval followed his speech. So loud was the clapping that it wakened up the babies. Getting them quiet gave me time to draw my breath. I couldn't refuse their request and so with a voice like a stage-whisper I went at it. I told them, what I give you in the next chapter, the story of James McAllister and his wife, and the dinner the three of us had in their tiny home in the sub-arctics a quarter century ago. I described some of the customs of the north, what we had that day for our meal, and what we talked about. They listened eagerly to it all. The story of the Last Chance wedding held them enthralled. When I ended it was nearly midnight. In announced the closing hymn, *Lead, Kindly Light.* They had to sing it without my aid. My singing voice was gone. When they finished I said the benediction the third time! They sat down, and I could see I was in for more if I didn't take the initiative and get away without delay. So I wasted no time in asking Wright to get his lantern, wife, and children, and we would start out the three miles to his home, where I was to stay the night. We were the first to leave. Before going I wished them

all, "A pleasant Tranksgiving, Merry Christmas, and Happy New Year!" The response they gave, and their heart-touching expressions of cordial thanks for the service sent me on my way rejoicing.

Oh yes, they "passed the hat!" It was their own wish. The amount of that collection, though it seems small when considered superficially, would put the richest congregation completely to shame when numbers and ability to give are taken into account. May I turn aside from my story to tell you that, besides the collections taken at the three or four meetings I hold annually there, each year they take up a subscription for the work. They started the custom in 1922. It was the first subscription ever taken on the island for any church. Every adult contributed. The children asked for a list and twenty of them from ten to fourteen years of age gave twenty-five cents each. The lists for grown-ups were four in number. One was taken around by N. C. Washburn, a Christian Scientist; another by Mason a Salvation Army man; a third by Reitz, a German-American and a worthy member of the Reformed Church of Zwingli; and the fourth by Chas. Williams, an Anglican. I am giving their real names. Mason's list was headed by Fred. Copley, one of two brothers who belong to the Reformed Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, followed by Mrs. Grant, a Roman Catholic, and then a man who signed himself simply, "A Red." Another

list was started by a Scandinavian who is a disciple of Swedenborg, followed by a young woman lately out from Kilwinning, Scotland. She belongs to the Church of the Original Secession, a real true-blue Covenanter communion. She was, then, the only person of Presbyterian lineage on the island. When the list was completed, the while business being so far all unknown to me, they presented it one bright summer Sunday afternoon at Tucker Bay. They had fixed up an old barn for the gathering and arranged it to be held so that everyone on the island, east and west, that could walk would be able to come. It was unprecedented in the annals of the settlement. You will easily perceive, if you have imagination, how any man with a heart would be deeply affected by the wonderful and generous evidence of friendship and gratitude. One tastes of the choicest "wine of life" at such times. I did my poor best to put my deep feelings into words. That Sunday was, indeed, "a day of pleasant bread" to us all.

But when I started to tell you about this we were just about to leave the schoolhouse after the first meeting. As Mr. and Mrs. Wright and I and their two children, trudged along through the darkness there was very little said. The dominant feeling in my mind was a longing to get to bed. It was after one o'clock when we reached home. The woman wanted to have the stove lighted and make a little supper for us. I

told her they could suit themselves. I was hungry but I needed sleep a hundred times more than food. If she would give me the candle I would go to my room immediately. I was into bed in a jiffy. I didn't say my prayers that night, would have gone to sleep on my knees if I had tried to say them.

It seemed as if I had just got to asleep when I heard a knock on the door and Wright's voice saying, "Better get up and have some breakfast. It's half-past nine!" It was surely Sunday morning. When I got my eyes properly opened I realized that the weather had cleared during the night, the sunshine was streaming into my room. There was, too, a pleasant smell of breakfast in the air which made it easier to get up. In an hour I had eaten and was tramping along the trail to Tucker Bay, there to board my boat, and set out through Sabine Channel and Malaspina Strait for Pender Harbor where, among two groups along its shores, I was to preach that afternoon and evening.

CHAPTER X.

A KLONDIKE CHRISTMAS DAY.

1. THE DINNER.

IT WAS the winter of 1904. Jas. McAllister had invited me to have dinner on Christmas Day with him and his wife. Their cabin was half-way up the mountain side on the left limit of Hunker Creek, six miles below Gold Bottom camp where I lived. You need have no fear of having a "green Christmas" in the Yukon with its eight months of solid winter with anywhere from 50 to 90 degrees of frost. It was "fifty below" that morning. Every nail-head on the door of my cabin was white with frost. My little stove had its work cut out, after I lit it and hopped back into my bunk again, before it had warmed the cabin enough to make it comfortable for dressing. I remember how that fall my top bed-blankets had become frozen solid to the logs at the back of the bunk while I was out on the trail one week and they never loosened up until the Spring, so that my bed rarely was disarranged and was very easily made. When I took out some food for my dogs they crawled out of

their kennels stiff with lying for warmth all night in one position. The exposed parts of head and shoulder were coated white with frost from their breath. They bolted their breakfast and got back quickly to the comfort of the nests they had left. The gulch was filled with the white mist which developed in extreme cold. It hid from my view the few cabins on the other side of the creek. Then I came in to get my breakfast. As a special treat I had sent to Dawson twenty miles away for a pound of beeksteak for which I had to pay a fabulous price in gold-dust. It was real beefsteak but it had been "on the hoof" too long and was very tough. Not so tough though as the steak McCrimmon told me he had got in Dawson by rare good luck in 1897 when he had been feeding on bacon and beans for months. "That bit of steak," he said, "lasted me off and on for a week. I got away with it at last but it was a long, hard fight. Honest, parson, that steak was so tough the first time I tackled it I couldn't get my fork into the gravy!"

Breakfast finished and the dishes washed I put on my parka over my other clothes and with fur gauntlets and moccasins I was ready for the road. The parka, by the way, is a loose-fitting, smock-like garment that slips over the head and comes down below the knees and has a hood. It is made of bed-ticking usually and so is light to walk in but keeps the heat in and the cold out. First I went across to Bill Lennox's cabin

and asked him to feed my dogs at noon. Then I hit the trail for McAllister's. I followed it along the bottom of the narrow valley among miners' windlass-dumps and cabins. At most of them I stepped in for a few minutes to wish my friends a Merry Christmas and also to tell or hear the news. There was always something of living interest to gossip about in those glorious, exciting days. Men were finding fortunes ten or twenty feet below the surface of the ground or even in the grass roots. Fortunes they were in the alluring form of gold-dust and nuggets, fascinating, raw, yellow gold lying there just where God made and dropped it. I've seen it so plentiful that it looked like a sack of corn-meal spilled among the dirt. It drove men crazy, and how could they help it. A wild, glorious gamble it was, with the thrill of adventure, temptation, and novelty always present, and a wonderfully beautiful land, new and interesting, as its setting.

It was towards noon before I turned out of the main trail, taking one that wound its way up the mountain side for half a mile until it came out on a flat stretch of snow. I was now above the frost-fog and could see, a few hundred yards away, a small straight plume of white smoke rising out of what looked like a big shapely snowdrift. The trail ran straight to it and soon I could see a log or two of the little cabin showing between the comb of snow hanging from the

eaves and the snow banked up against the base. The door was low and when it opened in response to my knock I had to bow my head to get in. I entered without ceremony for they were expecting me. I heard a cheery voice with a Doric accent tell me to "come right in." I could hear the voice but could see no one for with the opening of the door the warm air met the cold and immediately formed a veil of mist. But it was only for a moment for in the North, in winter, you don't keep the door open long. You either come in or get out, as the case may be, without lingering on the threshold. But what a hearty welcome when the door was shut behind me from McAllister and his good wife! No delay either, no shuffling your feet in the hall until the maid takes your card to mysterious regions in the inner chambers of the house, and comes back to lead you into a waiting room where you may sit down. Betimes the hostess graciously appears and with formal greeting and conventional smile gives you a hand to shake that has, on occasions, as much welcome in it as the tail of a dead fish. But this welcome was real, immediate, and unmistakable. I was right at home as soon as I stepped into the cabin, for in so doing I came into the parlour, dining room, bed-room, and kitchen. They hadn't even "a but and ben." There was something special about their welcome too, even in the hospitable north. To the miners generally I was known as the "sky-pilot,"

or "parson," or by my first or last name. But to these two old Presbyterians with their Scottish traditions I was always "the minister," and so in my reception there was a respect and courtesy that gave their greetings a rare fineness of tone. Sometimes it is good for you to have people place you on a pedestal. You usually try to measure up to expectations and in that country self-respect was often the sheet-anchor that kept you from drifting to the devil.

It was only a one-room cabin eight feet wide and twelve feet long, log walls chinked with moss, rough board floor, roof of poles covered with a foot of moss and a half foot of earth on the top. The only place I could stand upright in it was under the ridge-pole. There was one window of four panes, each about the size of a woman's handkerchief. The glass was coated an inch deep in frost, but some light came through, though not enough to dispense with candles. Under the window was a table, simply a shelf two and a half feet wide and three feet long. At the end of the cabin opposite the door was the bed, and to the left the stove, a sheet-iron one-chambered affair with an oven in the pipe, a simple, small, Klondike stove which was not much to look at but capable of great things when rightly handled. After taking off my parka it was to the stove I went first. It's a habit you form in the North any way, but if you have a moustache, as I had, the heavy icicles formed by your breath on a

six-mile walk in that extreme cold need to be thawed off near the stove, and that by a gentle, careful process, the reason for this gentleness only experience would make you appreciate. Once this is done there is no need to sit near the stove. Indeed you can't get far away from it if you stay in the cabin.

But I must describe my host and hostess. Mr. and Mrs. McAllister looked more like brother and sister than husband and wife. They were both small of stature and resembled each other. Both were well past middle life. Their hair was growing gray. They had no children, but his pet name for his little woman was "Grannie." McAllister had graduated from a Scottish University and after his marriage decided to leave the old land for America. They settled in California. As the years went on they found themselves getting within sight of old age without enough money laid by to save them from dependence on others in their declining years. Then came the news of the gold discoveries. It appealed to him for he saw in this adventure a chance to lay the haunting spectre of poverty. Grannie stayed behind in their pretty cottage home in the sunny south. A year or at most two and they hoped he would be back with enough to put their minds at ease. In 1897 he set out and after a trying journey reached the Klondike in 1898. He managed to find and stake this shelf of pay-gravel far up the mountain side. It had ages ago been part of the bed

of a stream. He worked with eager haste to get enough to go back to his home and loved one. But the run of "pay' was poor and uneven, water was scarce, and his "tailings" required continual "cribbing" to keep from coming down on claims in the creek below. It all meant enforced delay in the realization of his hopes. The summers came and went with clean-ups good and bad but in the aggregate not quite enough for the fulfilment of his plans. Grannie was wearying for him and at last after six lonesome years she could stand it no longer. She heard that there was a railway now over the White Pass and steamboats on the river, and so in the Spring of 1903 she bravely set out for the North-land where she could be with her man again. Nearly two years she had been among us, a dear little lady with a heart so kind, and pure, and motherly that she became the patron saint of our creek. Men fiercely tempted in those strange days have found strength to save their souls because of the ministry of Grannie's life and words.

But we were just sitting down to dinner at the little table in front of the window. First I said a simple grace thanking God for our food and asking a blessing upon it and us. We had soup to begin with, thick hot Scotch broth it was, then roast ptarmigan, two each of these plump, tasty little birds which the old man had shot from the cabin door, native cranberry sauce, parsnips and potatoes. These

were good "cheechako spuds" shipped in from the South. We had home-grown potatoes in the Klondike sometimes, but in a summer which had one or two nights of nipping frost every month it was hard to ripen them. They were usually small and green, and so "wet" that the saying was "you had to wear a bathing-suit to eat them." Also of course there was home-made bread and excellent tea.

But the dessert was the masterpiece of the meal. It was a good, hot, Canadian blueberry pie about as big round as the top of a piano-stool. It had a top crust on it and the juice was bubbling out through the little slits. It certainly looked delicious and it tasted the same. It was cut into only four pieces. I maintain that no self-respecting pie should be cut into more than four pieces except perhaps in the case of a very large family. Grannie gave me one piece, McAllister one, and took one herself. That left one over and when I was through with my piece I was urged of course to have the other piece. What could I do? What would you have done in my place? Courtesy, inclination to oblige, and my palate all said take it. My waistband said, "Have a care," but it was awfully good pie and I cleaned the plate!

Then McAllister lit his pipe. Grannie cleared up the table but left the dishwashing until after I had gone as she wanted to share the conversation. What a jolly three hours we had! Not a great deal there to make

us happy, you would say; a lonely log-cabin in a far land and in the depth of an almost Arctic winter with no other human habitation within sight or sound. Yet we forgot the fierce cold that circled us, for the little place was comfortable, and better still our hearts were warm with love and friendship. McAllister was finely educated and had travelled, so the cabin was neither small nor lonely. Its walls expanded and took in many guests. A goodly throng was there for we wandered at will among a world of books and men. He loved a good, clean joke, and let me tell you when we got going the stories, both grave and gay, were worth your hearing.

Grannie was with us heart and soul in it all. Her face beamed with cheeriness and good will. Sometimes, however, a far-away look came into her brown eyes. I knew what it meant. She longed to get away from the North and back again to the sunshine of her Southern home. She was getting on in years and our extreme winters were very trying to her. Whenever she got half a chance she would tell us something about their home in California, the warm, bright summers, the lovely gardens she and her neighbours had, and the flowers growing in profusion, especially the roses charming the eye and filling the air with their perfume.

Dear wee Grannie, she never lived to go back. One winter the brutal cold gripped her and in spite of all we could do it took her life away. It was a sad

day when we placed her body in the grave on that hillside. All the creek assembled to show their affection, and in deep sorrow. It was her last request that she should be buried there. She didn't want to be far from the man she loved even though it meant a lonely grave in a lonely land. The Klondike became McAllister's homeland until the end of his days on earth. He never left the North even for a visit. He died in 1922 and was buried beside his wife on the lonely mountain slope.

But there was no thought of sorrow that Christmas Day. Nowhere in the world was there a merrier party, and when it came time for me to go, (I had a wedding at Last Chance Roadhouse), it was with a feeling that the cabin had been a sanctuary of friendship, happiness and hospitality. When I went out into the darkness and the bitter cold I was hardly conscious of it for my heart was aglow. All through these years filled with many vivid experiences that day has kept its brightness. Nor will it ever fade away but seems to shine more clearly in the Halls of Memory as the years go by.

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2. THE WEDDING.

Four miles down the snow trail and across the creek valley, and I was at Last Chance Roadhouse. The wedding party was waiting for me when I ar-

rived. The roadhouse was a low, log building about fifty feet long and twenty wide. There were no partitions. The bar was at one end, the kitchen at the other, and the part in between was a sort of "Any-man's Land". It was dining-room, parlor, and gambling room in one. The bunk-house was separate. Things were "humming" from kitchen to bar, for remember it was Christmas at a roadhouse on a main creek trail in the Klondike in early days. The place was crowded with men of all sorts and all nations. Women of ill-repute were there, gambling was going on, the bar was doing a big business, the air was thick with smoke and noisy with ribald, drunken songs and laughter.

Not the most suitable place in the world for a wedding. For all that, it went through in fine style. We stood up beside the table and they all grew quiet. A blanket was hung up by the roadhouse man in front of the bar—done because of his innate sense of the fitness of things. There was no bothersome noise, except the opening and closing of the doors as people came in and went out, and the stage-whispering of a few men in the bar who were too far along with their celebrations for their fellows to control them completely. The names of the bride and groom, their true names, were, Jensine Kolken and John Peczu Kazinsky. She was a Norwegian Lutheran, he a Hungarian Roman Catholic, married by a Canadian Presbyterian minister

in a Klondike roadhouse. Rather an unusual combination but it turned out splendidly. They loved one another sincerely and all these years have lived happily. They are prosperous and have several children.

After the wedding many toasts were drunk. I drank mine in soda-water. Before the toasts Mrs. Kazinsky had gone to the kitchen and was there busy about supper. She was the roadhouse cook and had a lot of work to do that must be done without delay, preparing and serving meals to the holiday crowd. I said good-bye, put on parka and mitts, and set out on my seven mile tramp to Gold Bottom, where we had arranged a Camp Christmas Tree Entertainment for that night.

It was cold, bitter cold, the roadhouse thermometer said 50 below zero, and yet it was a grand night. We had seen no sun night or day for weeks, but for all that it was as clear as day with a light more beautiful than that of the sun. The whole broad, snow-white gulch around me was flooded with light. I looked up to the sky and there my eyes beheld a wondrous sight, magnificent beyond imagining. The dome of heaven, from east to west and from north to south, was filled with an iridescent misty glory, glowing with strange light in which gleamed lovely, delicate shades of green and gold. You could see this luminous mist and yet see through it as if it weren't there at all. It was almost uncanny, like seeing the

invisible. In the midst of it floated the moon at the full, ablaze with abundant light, spilling it down in wasteful abundance mixed with the Aurora, coming to the silent earth to change it to a glistening, white fairyland of unrivalled beauty. Far, far beyond in the clear depths of the cloudless sky a thousand, thousand stars sparkled intensely like well-set jewels. As I gazed the misty glory disappeared as if by magic and in its place I saw great arrows of witching light shooting in masses back and forth through the air.

I stood, as many times I did those winter nights, spell-bound and reverent in the presence of God's handiwork. Fancy took wing. Perchance this fair light was from the shining pinions of angels as they flew hither and thither on heavenly errands. Perchance it was the gleaming from a myriad spears, as the armies of the Lord of Hosts marched and countermarched in some Grand Parade. Or were these the wild, elemental forces of nature playing at games that the Creator had taught them and that they had played from all eternity?

Apart from these dreamings, I know I shall never see anything, with my mortal eyes at least, so startlingly and mystically beautiful as these canvasses which God hangs out night after night in the far North for all to see who will but lift up their eyes to the heavens.

CHAPTER XI.

AN ODD JOB.

BEFORE leaving the Lasquetians may I recount another day's experience there? It was two years later. Driven in by a storm we had taken refuge one night in Squitty Bay, a bottle-shaped cove at the eastern end of the island. There was perfect shelter inside even though you could see huge waves piling on the rocks twenty yards away. The entrance is very difficult in bad weather or darkness. The channel is scarcely twelve feet wide at low tide and the approach is beset by reefs. Next day the wind went down and the sea grew calm although there was a ground-swell running in the Gulf. We decided to lie snugly at anchor there until the afternoon.

Two of the ranchers rowed out from shore that morning to visit us. Their names were Mason and Millicheap. We had plenty of good talk for an hour or two.

Among other subjects our conversation turned to books and writers. Millicheap is well-educated and widely-travelled. He is of a contemplative mind. After he left I jotted down some of his best ideas and here is a précis of some he expressed that morning.

He wondered if the human mind had reached its best dimensions in thought, that all it could do now was to fill out and elaborate the content. We look back, he said, for the choicest in literature. The great lights are far behind us. Shakespeare, of course, is pre-eminent. Personally he would dare to place George Borrow and his Lavengro first in prose. He considered that Dickens surpassed in popular appeal. Maeterlinck and Ibsen had a message for their own time. Nietsche clears away the fog of the great, labored thought of Immanuel Kant, but at the same time steals the sweetness out of life and puts vinegar in its place. Spencer is the finest and most wide-visioned mind in philosophy but lacks Kant's depth. Bernard Shaw was brilliant, like a dazzling flare that brings out surrounding things with startling clearness. Shaw and Wells play their game magnificently, but it is anybody's game of exposing and ridiculing mistakes. With flourish of banner and stirring note of trumpet, Shaw marches the cripples of humanity past us in procession, and as they hobble along he uncovers their blemishes and laughs delightfully at the crooked forms and ugliness of our heroes. It is amazingly clever and true. It is rare fun but when stripped of all its scintillating genius isn't it only making sport of cripples? A mean game, he thought, say what we may in its favor, even though we enjoy it and often practise it in our own lives. Shaw, in St. Joan, his later and better work, is

happily changing his habit of ridicule. In this play he shows a tenderness towards stumbling humanity, a sympathy with faltering faith, that makes him appeal not only to the intellect but also to the heart of his readers. Wells does try to be constructive but in a wild, hit-and-miss way that takes little account of the slow-working laws of permanent progressive growth in social development. Sometimes he discards the old simply because it is old. He wants to be always forcing civilization to take short-cuts to betterment. He has championed a dozen different ones. All are now discarded except that which happens to be his latest fancy. Scott he liked until he read Borrow's description of him. Now he couldn't read him. In understanding the human heart he thought Robert Burns would come next to Shakespeare even though there was a big gap between.

Well, that is just a rough attempt to summarize that bush-rancher's views as expressed that morning. It is not a question of agreeing or disagreeing with his critique. His ideas are reproduced to convince you that in these backwoods there are always some who are quite able to appreciate fully the best you can give them in sermon and conversation; and very often, if he has good sense, the preacher, instead of preaching, will let himself listen and learn.

Mason, an old man, had evidently something on his mind. He owned a very small gas-boat on which

he had taken Mrs. Andrews over to the Ballenas Lighthouse to visit her daughter. He told us that he had promised to go for her again that afternoon if the weather were at all fit. Now Mrs. Andrews was almost helpless from rheumatism in her feet and shoulders, and weighed over one hundred and eighty pounds. So to get her on and off a boat took careful manipulation. it involved a certain amount of risk and a good deal of worry. There was that light ground-swell on the Gulf, not enough to notice going over for the old lady, but enough to make the loading and unloading part of the task, to which Mason had committed himself, very uninviting and really dangerous. This prospect accounted for his silence and gloomy countenance. He hinted at our helping him out with the *Sky Pilot.* Wherever a chance of such service offers our answer is heartily and immediately in the affirmative.

So after dinner we set out for the lighthouse about an hour away. We had a little mishap. When close in, slowed down, and looking about for anchorage, we slid up on a hidden reef. Luckily the tide was rising and in a quarter hour we slid back off again. Then we anchored and all went ashore. Pettingell, the keeper, and his wife wanted me to christen their two girlies. While Mrs. Pettingell was getting her children into their best clothes he showed us around the place. We climbed the tower and had the wonders of the lights and the whole elaborate system explained to

us. When we came down to the house again everything was in order for the baptism. The parents acknowledged Christ as their Saviour and promised to do all they could to bring up their children to love, trust, and follow Jesus. Our prayers for ourselves and our children were symbolized in the life-sustaining and purifying powers of water. The simple ceremony ended we all were invited to a dainty tea which Mrs. Pettingell had prepared. It was thoroughly enjoyed. After a happy hour of music and talk we rose to go.

Then we had to face the task of getting the old lady aboard the mission-boat. After some trouble we had her stowed safely, amidships, in the dinghy and rowed smoothly out to our anchored boat. There the serious problem presented itself of lifting our weighty passenger, scarcely able to help herself, on to the deck of the *Sky Pilot*. We had a bad half hour before we succeeded. The swells had increased and we were going slowly up and dow and tumbling a little. Every time we would try to hoist her up the small-boat would move out too far from the mission-boat. The effort of lifting forced the boats apart. In some respects it was a very amusing performance but the riskiness of it spoiled the joke. At last, fortunately, by one desperate united effort at the right moment, with Mason on the *Sky Pilot* pulling up, and Price and me in the row-boat pushing, we were able to roll Mrs. Andrews safely aboard. No harm was done save a badly scraped

shin for the missionary and a few bruises for the others. Mrs. Andrews, who through it all had been the cheeriest of the lot and didn't seem to mind being handled like a sack of potatoes, was soon made comfortable. We pulled away from the Light with the group on the rock waving and watching us until we were far out. Before dark our passenger was safely disembarked at Lasqueti, an easier process, and glad to get back safely to her cabin home.

CHAPTER XII.

RESCUE OF THE LEES.

JOHNSON, an old fisherman on the British Columbia coast, had put up a two-roomed shack on the lower point of Texada Island. At that place there are about 50 square yards of level land along the shore. Immediately behind rises the mountain in a succession of precipitous cliffs. The old man used to "hole up" there in the slack time between fishing seasons. It was cheaper to do this than to pay for lodging in Nanaimo. To protect himself from possibly unwelcome neighbors, he took up a pre-emption of one hundred and sixty acres, making the first small payment required by the government.

Texada Island is about thirty miles long and ten wide. It lies in the Strait of Georgia, with Malaspina Strait to the north-east separating it from the mainland. At its extreme north-west end are the tiny settlements of Blubber Bay and Vananda. In those two places and within a radius of eight miles of them there are, altogether, about three hundred people. Two limestone quarries and a sawmill provide employment.

The other twenty miles of the island is an almost impassable mountain-wilderness, without roads or

trails, covered by heavy brush and rough timber, and uninhabited except by wild animals.

When the salmon became depleted in the waters along the southern shores of the province, Johnson decided to abandon his worthless homestead and shack and go farther north. He had intended to just "quit it cold," but, when in Vancouver one day, the fancy took him to go into a real estate office and try to sell it. He was surprised and pleased when he was offered twenty-five dollars for his rights. He took the money and handed over his papers.

Now that you have the facts about that homestead with its two-roomed shed, its fifty yards of ground strewn with boulders, and its rugged precipices, let us go to another series of incidents that will seem, at first, as if they didn't belong to the story.

In far away London, England, a young man named John Lee fell in love with a young woman named Nancy Brown. The plot thickens when I tell you that she also fell in love with him. And then, of course, they were married. John Lee's father gave them his blessing accompanied by a very acceptable dowry of four hundred pounds. The young couple decided, after the honeymoon, that they would use the money to take them to some place overseas, there to make their start in a new land where there seemed more chance to get ahead.

About that time, as bad luck would have it, they

happened to chance on an advertisement in an English paper which read thus: "For sale, in British Columbia, Canada, only 40 miles from Vancouver city, 160 acres of land with house, situated on an island in the sunny Pacific, southerly exposure, gently sloping to the sea, fish all around. Two hundred pounds cash will buy it." Doesn't that sound enticing? As you read it you can feel the balmy breezes, and almost see the silvery salmon leaping from the shining water, with the warm rays of the gorgeous, setting sun transforming it into the picture of what must have seemed like a paradise to residents in smoky, foggy, old London! Do you recognize the place? It is Johnson's homestead!

I may as well hasten to tell you what you've already guessed, that the Lees bought the place without seeing it and paid over their two hundred pounds. They were young, trustful, hopeful, inexperienced, and, I suppose, any place "looked good" to them where they could live together. After a few months of preparation they came to Canada and crossed to Vancouver. A baby was born to them there, a little girl. They named her Mary. When the mother was strong enough they took the steamboat to Pender Harbor. A gas-boat man was there hired to take them across Malaspina Strait and through Sabine Channel, to their new home, a four-hour run away from Pender. I do not know exactly what their thoughts were when they saw the mountains overhanging their little bit of rough shore-land that

looked as big, in comparison, as the palm of your hand. I am sure, however, that they must have been grievously disappointed and almost heart-broken, and certainly would have some bitter thoughts about the way they had been "sold."

But they went bravely at it and for two weary years they did their level best to make the homestead pay. They first tried raising chickens. But there was no market within reach, and the cost of feed, which had to be transported from Pender Harbor by gas-boat, was prohibitive. Then one night, in the Spring, a little landslide came down off the mountain, buried their hen-house, and covered up half their garden. Lee next attempted to get into the fishing game. He bought a second-hand gas-boat in such poor shape and, as soon found, so unsuited for the work that he wisely sold it for half its cost. It was all a slow, painful process of disillusionment. During these long, disheartening months they had practically no visitors. They had, of course, no neighbors. The nearest person on Texada was Jimmie Kitto, an old man living alone in a cabin ten miles away. You couldn't get to him over the mountains, you would have to go by boat along the shore. Five miles back from Kitto over a kind of deer-track, lived Tom Godsall. From this place there was a rough trail of three miles to the edge of the Gillies Bay settlement which consisted of a dozen Scandinavian families. Thence you had to go

eight miles to get to Vananda where there were about a hundred people. So the Lees were shut off almost completely from intercourse with other folks. They got their mail at Tucker Bay, Lasqueti Island, four miles away across Sabine Channel. The mail came once a week to Tucker Bay, weather permitting. On Lasqueti there were, maybe, one hundred and twenty-five people, no two of their lonely cabins within sight of each other in the dense timber. I had called to see the Lees whenever I was in those waters, perhaps a half-dozen times in all, and I could see their hopes gradually dying and the loneliness of the place eating into their hearts. I had done my best for them with advice and little bits of help but I could see things going from bad to worse. Their little baby, a happy, healthy youngster, was the one bright spot in their lives.

It was near the end of their second year when I had reason to pay one of my rare visits to Lasqueti. I hadn't called at Lee's because of a task that had unexpectedly come our way requiring a trip across the Gulf to Nanaimo. A man's body had just been found on the island, one for whom unavailing search had been made for several months and finally given up. It was a mysterious case. There was no telegraph communication and it was expedient in the interests of justice that the authorities should be told without delay. There was a nasty sea running and it happened that the *Sky Pilot* was the only boat available strong

enough to comfortably make the crossing. We stayed at Nanaimo all night. Next day we returned chased along by a stiff wind and a following sea.

Coming through Bull Passage nearing Tucker Bay, I said to my engineer, "We've been pretty steadily at it, Price, for a week now without any proper sleep or rest. What do you say if, after we anchor in Tucker Bay, I row ashore and get some home-made bread, butter, and milk at Washburn's. Then let's have a nice little supper, and crawl into our berths early for a real good sleep?" "I can't think of anything, Cap.," he replied, "that would suit me better."

Up to a certain point everything went as planned. As I was leaving Washburn's with the food he handed me a letter which John Lee had brought over for me from Texada, left it, and then rowed back. I opened it and read as follows:

Dear Mr. Pringle:—

Our little girl, Mary, has been ill for some days and seems to be getting worse. We are greatly worried. Do you think you could come over and take us on the *Sky Pilot* to some place where there's a doctor? We hope you can.

Yours sincerely,

JOHN LEE.

I lost no time in getting back to the mission-boat. I handed Price the letter. "Well," he said, "we had better get right at that job. Won't do to wait till to-morrow. The kid might die and we'd never forgive ourselves." We hurriedly ate two or three slices of

bread and butter, washed it down with milk, then soon had the engine going, the anchor hoisted and safely stowed, and were on our way across the Channel. My purpose was to take the Lees to Powell River, a paper-mill town on the mainland, the nearest place having a doctor that we could reach in that weather. We would have to travel thirty miles up the Strait of Georgia to the head of Texada and then ten miles across Malaspina Strait to the mainland.

When we got in as close to their place as we dared go, Price idled the engine and I went astern intending to lower our dinghy, a sturdy row-boat, and go ashore for them. But, looking landwards, I saw that they had already set out. There they were, Lee at the oars, his wife in the stern with the precious little bundle in her arms. The boat he had was so small and unseaworthy that it wasn't safe for one person. Lee was awkward with the oars, and besides there was a heavy swell, a back-wash from the Gulf, coming in around us. As I stood there on our slowly rolling boat and saw that "walnut shell" coming towards us, now in the trough of the sea, now on the crest of a big wave, I came nearly being seasick. It was a sort of nervousness. I knew the danger the Lees were in. They were blissfully unconscious of it. By a miracle they got safely alongside us and by another miracle I got them aboard. I tied their boat to the stern-rail and took them down into our little cabin.

On the floor I put some pillows and a quilt or two, with several layers of newspapers spread out on top. I requested them to sit or lie on the floor, asking that because we were soon going to be pitching and rolling violents. If they attempted to stand up they were likely to be thrown down and severely, perhaps seriously, hurt. I questioned them as to being good sailors. Mrs. Lee replied, humorously, that she wasn't, it made her seasick every time she put her hands into the wash-tub! Lee said he was nearly as bad. So I knew there was a very unpleasant time ahead for them. I thought it best to tell them the worst and speak frankly about this unpleasant business. So I urged them not to attempt to go on deck or even move from where they were no matter how ill they became. There was nothing to be ashamed of in being seasick. The very finest people do it! I told them it would take us about seven wearisome hours of hard, rough going to reach our destination. Having given the dark side of the picture I cheered them by praising my boat, a stout, new launch with teak-planked hull and Australian gum-wood sheathing. It could stand up to anything we would put it into. Then, too, I reminded them that we were taking their baby to a doctor. That thought surely would be a cheering one. Then I closed hatch and port-holes, made everything fast, went into the pilot-house, took the wheel, put in the clutch, and swung out from shore. Price "nursed" the engine.

In half-an-hour we were out beyond the shelter of Lasqueti and into the open Strait. The waves came piling on us with flying foam. I cannot go into details. You will have to try to imagine you see the little forty-foot boat tossed about like a feather in the stormy sea. Sometimes it seemed as if we were on our way to the bottom when some big comber would break and sweep over us. We staggered, and plunged, and rolled, so that sometimes you would think we weren't going to right ourselves. We fought our way along hour after hour. Darkness came on and soon all we could see was the occulting beacon light miles away at Cape Mudge. Black darkness and the wild roar of the sea wrapped us round. I had a ship's compass and knew my bearings and course, so I wasn't anxious. I edged out a mile or so further from land just to be sure.

The Lees must have been having a very trying time. Now and then I motioned Price to open the cabin door and look in at them. He would do so and then look up at me with a grin. It told me, as plainly as words, that they were extremely ill but were all right. Contradictory statements, but both true!

To shorten the tiresome journey for you I'll leave out any further description of it, and just tell you that before midnight we had run into the welcome shelter of the breakwater at Powell River and were soon safely tied up to the float. We got the Lees out

of the cabin, on to the float, and up on the wharf. They were so weak we had almost to carry them. I got a taxi and took them to the hospital. On the way Mrs. Lee said, "That was a terrible trip for us. I thought I'd die from sickness and scare, but there was a song down in my heart, thinking I was taking my baby to a doctor. Then I was awfully glad to get away from that desert place. I think I was slowly going crazy. It was so awfully lonely!"

At the hospital I had them sit in the waiting-room while I went in to see Dr. Marlatt. He had got out of bed and had come across from his home to the hospital when I 'phoned him. I explained the situation in a word or two, told him I didn't know what was wrong with the child, but I wanted him to somehow arrange that it should be sick enough to hold them in Powell River for three or four weeks, for, if they went back too soon to their ranch, the woman would shortly lose her mind or die. I asked if he couldn't get Lee a job in the mill so that they wouldn't need to go back at all. Marlatt understood and I left the affair in his hands. On the way down to the *Sky Pilot* I stepped in to the hotel and secured a room for Mr. and Mrs. Lee and asked the clerk to 'phone the doctor the arrangement. By the time I got back to the float, Price had the cabin all cleaned and aired. We lit the gas-stove, had a cup of tea, and then tumbled into our berths. I can assure you we didn't need the gentle rocking of the boat to

lull us to sleep. The morning was half gone when we wakened.

Of course you want to know how it all ended. Dr. Marlatt told me that the baby was so near death, with prolonged inflammation of the bowels, that another day's delay would have put it beyond human aid. Mrs. Lee broke down after the long strain and was in hospital herself for two weeks. But it all had a happy issue. Lee got a job in the pulp-mill. He went back to his place only once and that was to get some bits of furniture and their clothes and books. He abandoned the homestead.

This all happened seven years ago. They are still in Powell River, in good health, and doing well. Mary, a dear lassie, is going to school and she can spell hard words like "rat" and cat"! She has a little baby brother now, of whom she is very proud. When I happen in they never fail to recall those painful years on Texada and that unforgettable voyage through the darkness and the storm.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE SKOOKUMCHUCK.

ON the Pacific coast, sixty miles out from Vancouver, west by north, there is an isolated district called "the Skookumchuck." There a mighty, madly-whirling,tidal river, a crooked half-mile long and two hundred yards wide, roars out and in between Sechelt and Jervis Inlets. In the Chinook jargon "Skookum" means strong and "Chuck" means water, hence the name of this turbulent, dangerous, salt water river. Two miles away you can hear its tumult when the big tides are running. The mountainous, forest-clad land around it gets its name from these tidal rapids.

The mountains slope right down to the sea. There isn't much margin of level shore-line. At St. Vincent's Bay they have a small one-roomed school. Twelve children attend it. They all come in row-boats. The mountains crowd it close to the water. When a storm comes up the light spray from the breakers flies against the windows, and the waves make so much noise, pounding on the rocks, the teacher can barely hear the children's voices when they stand up to read.

Some years ago I went up Jervis Inlet on the *Sky Pilot* to visit for the first time the dozen or so families

living along these lonely shores. It was a four-hour run from my home-port, Vananda, before we got within sound of the noisy Chuck. It was still a long way off but we proceeded cautiously with many careful looks at our chart until we reached Wray's little landing and tied up to the float there. I went ashore and got details from Wray about the location of the different homes in the neighborhood, and then set out in my dinghy, rowing close to land, to visit them. Some lived near the sea and others a few hundred yards back in the woods. The morning passed and I had called at three or four shacks getting acquainted with the people and they with me, never talking religion unless they asked me to and then very briefly. Such conversations would develop naturally in days to come when we got to know each other better. I feel that personal religion is too intimate and sacred a matter to talk about easily with a passing stranger.

About dinner-time I came to Fisher's cabin, (that's not his real name but it will do). Wray had warned me about him, suggested I pass him by as he would likely insult me. He was outside with his two sons. They were coming up from the shore where they had been mending their nets. I told him who and what I was. "Well," he said, "I have absolutely no use for preachers," and he proceeded to expand the idea with details that, whatever else they lacked, did not want for emphatic statement. His argument, expurgated,

ran thus: "You preachers are the salaried representatives of an elaborate and wealthy organization, supported largely by capitalists, which seeks to perpetuate an old superstition about a God, and Hell, and Heaven. You are non-producers and parasites. You and your type administer a sort of opiate to the working-class telling them to be good and obey their masters the capitalists. The workers of this world would be a thousand times better off if this highly organized, powerful, burdensome superstition you call the church were swept clean off the earth." He went on further saying over a lesson which he knew by heart, one I have heard in varying forms a hundred times. He ended with, "This is the first time I've seen one of you birds around these parts. We get along fine without you and you're neither wanted nor needed."

But I didn't take up the gage of battle in earnest. I said quietly and in a kindly way, "Mr. Fisher, I am an older man than you, I have had a more intense and far wider experience, am better educated, and know a whole lot more about social problems than you do, and I want just to say that you are wrong in your ideas, ten years behind the time in your information, and largely out of touch with the most progressive thought in labor circles among our own kith and kin. You have also treated me to an unnecessary exhibition of swearing, hoping thereby to lend force to your dogmatism. Swearing isn't argument, but

even if it were you have fallen down in it too. Your swearing is extremely antiquated and rheumatic. It has a very limited vocabulary and it doesn't flow easily. Many of the words are obsolete, not now used by the best exponents of the art. I know lots of choice words and phrases, (although I don't use them), that are much more expressive and up-to-date than yours, that you, apparently, have never heard of or don't know how to handle. You are a back-number in your own line. Your swearing is about as useful and ornamental as a wart on the end of one's nose and as up-to-date as a high-wheel bicycle. You said, too, that 'there ought to be no close-season for preachers. Working men should be free to shoot them any time.' I advise you to get clear away from this shooting business. I have seen a thousand times more of it than you will ever see. It is a horrible thing. Don't start it. Suppose you really meant what you said and got me with your '30-30.' There are a few fellows I know who, in a very short time after they heard of your good shooting, would be out gunning for you and they would assuredly get you with bullet or rope. Then your boys would try to get them, and, if allowed to go on, the shooting you started would develop into wide-spread misery, sorrow, murder, revenge and hate. There, in miniature, is the origin of war. Of course, you only meant it for a joke, but it's an old and bad brand of fun. Let's fight with logic and facts, our

minds open, observing the rules of fair-play and showing a measure of courtesy to each other." Of course he wanted to argue further for he had posed in the district as a red-hot iconoclast, atheist, and revolutionist.

But I refused to continue the discussion. I felt that it would be foolish to permit my first introduction to a man to culminate in a heated argument.. I offered a joke or two, said we wouldn't debate any more. Said I'd catch him alone some time when his two big husky sons weren't there! After a conventional word of farewell I started on my way. He halted me, however, by asking me if I'd had dinner. That was a hit below the belt! When I told him I hadn't he wouldn't let me go without sharing their simple meal in their humble home. When we were seated around the table I asked if I might say grace. But that was too big a request, and I should have known it, to make of one who had a reputation to sustain as a belligerent atheist. "No, No!" he said, "I don't want any of your superstitious incantations at my table. The food will taste as good, and do you as much good, without that abracadabra tomfoolery. Go ahead and eat!" I bowed my head and said to myself what I hope was a blessing although I was in anything but a pious frame of mind! However "the sky cleared" during the dinner and I began to tell some Klondike stories. I did my best to entertain them.

The yarns took. It was two hours after dinner when Mrs. Fisher said, with apologies, that she would have to ask us to sit back from the table for she wanted to get her dishes washed. I got up to leave soon after. They all followed me out and down the trail with friendliest words and hearty invitation to return. As we parted Fisher said, "I like your style. I haven't any use for preachers but I guess I'll have to make an exception of you!"

> He drew a circle that shut me out,
> I was parasite, bigot, a thing to flout;
> But love and I had the will to win,
> We drew a circle that took him in!

This change in the attitude of the Fishers needs little explanation. There was no strange trick used to cause it. They were just plain starving for a new line of talk. I was a circus to them after they forgot about me being a preacher. They were hungry for entertainment, the human touch, friendship. I am thoroughly convinced that this little yarn illustrates the principal line the ministrations of a frontier missionary must take for him to be of any real use besides sending in regular reports to his committee. He must put his mind to the task of making the lives of these people brighter, cheering them, softening their hearts, worming his way into their confidence so that some day they will let him help them in more serious and vital matters, getting them to look upon him as a true

and trustworthy friend. Then he must needs go on and act the friend up to his limit, being "coached" in in this by the Greatest Expert in friendship that humanity has ever known.

After leaving Fisher's I went on my way visiting everyone else in the locality that afternoon. They were all invited to come to the mission-boat in the evening for a meeting, for there was no shack big enough, convenient enough, and free from local bickerings, to which all could or would come. We moved our boat away from Wray's landing and anchored in Gill's Bay, a more central and safer location. That evening the *Sky Pilot* looked like a big mother-duck with her ducklings floating around her. About a dozen little craft, dug-outs, dinghies, and small gasboats were tied up to us, port, starboard, bow and stern, while their occupants had gone inside the mission-boat for service. Nearly forty people were packed into a cabin eighteen feet long and nine feet wide. The older children sat on the floor crowded in around my feet. Behind them on the berths and on five or six stools sat the grown-up folks with the babies on their knees. We sang *Jesus Loves Me, Dare To Be A Daniel, Brightly Beams Our Father's Mercy,* and other easily-sung, well-known hymns. I talked about Jesus and His Love. The Message was simple for it had to suit the children as well as the parents. I made my sermon very brief for my congregation were wedged

into cramped positions which I knew they could not keep very long without discomfort.

I wove my thoughts around a story that I heard related in the course of a wonderful sermon delivered in Free St. George's Church, Edinburgh, by Prof. T. R. Glover of Cambridge University. It was told to illumine the comforting truth that God is responsible for our salvation.

"In India," he said, "there is a cult of Hindus who look upon the monkey as sacred. In the Hindu scriptures it is recorded that long ago one of their saints was being chased by evil spirits. She ran down through the thicket to the water's edge, hoping to find a boat in which to cross the river to the opposite shore where she would be safe, for the demons could not cross running water. But no boat was there and the evil things were close behind. Fortunately the monkeys saw her distress and came to her aid. Swimming out, one head of the other in a long line, they made a floating bridge from shore to shore over which the good woman ran to safety on the other side. Then the bridge was broken and her pursuers were foiled.

"In grateful memory of this kindness, small temples have been built here and there in the forests and priests live in them whose business it is to feed the monkeys.

"It was my privilege to be invited to one of these temples and see the priests at work. When the food

was ready a bell was rung. In an incredibly short time the clearing was filled with monkeys of all sorts and ages. Such a chattering, snarling, and grabbing there was as soon as the stuff was thrown to them! Perhaps they knew they had to make haste, for very shortly the roar of lions and tigers was heard coming through the jungle to get what they could of the provender they had smelled. The monkeys commenced to run for their lives. Now there were mother-monkeys there with their little ones. These baby monkeys had to hold with their feet and hands to the mother's fur, hanging on, back down, underneath her. If they hadn't strength to hold on while the mothers scampered through the brush and up the trees, jumping from limb to limb, why they just had to fall, the old monkeys didn't help them. I saw a little one lose its grip and tumble to its death. That's the poor way those monkeys cared for their babies.

"Now I have seen something else that you, too, have all witnessed right at home. Sometime the mother cat at your place has had her family of wee kittens out in the shed. One day a big dog comes snooping around. The cat turns into a furious little tigress and chases that foolish dog away. Then she decides to bring her kittens into the kitchen for safety. If you will let her, in she comes holding her head high in the air with a helpless kitten in her mouth, her teeth set into the loose skin at the back of its neck. One

after another is brought in until her whole litter is cuddled up on the floor near the woodbox. Then she lies down beside them, licks them over and feeds them.

"Which shall it be between us and God, the monkey-religion or the cat-religion. Heart and soul I believe in the cat-religion. Once I have placed myself in God's care, seeking to do His will, it isn't my ability to hang on to God that makes me safe from my soul's enemies, but God's power to hold on to me. That is what I mean by the cat-religion. I suppose that sometimes the mother-cat's teeth hurt the baby kitten when she is carrying it to safety, so there are times when the teeth of God's wise love cause us pain as He takes us away from danger."

This was the story told in homely but beautiful phrase by that eminent scholar to thousands of cultured people that Sunday morning in old Edinburgh, re-told aboard the *Sky Pilot* that night in the Skookumchuck along the far Pacific shore.

After I got through one little girl was evidently bursting to tell me something. So she told us excitedly about what her cat actually did that day. It was a mother cat and when a great big dog came to the shed where her kittens were she jumped riht at the big dog and scratched his nose and drove him away howling, with his tail between his legs. She said she "guessed God would take care of us something as if we were little, blind kittens and He were the mother-cat." We

sang again and chatted a short while and then they commenced to leave for their homes. In a few minutes our flock of little ducks had left us and we were anchored there alone. It was clear moonlight and we could see the boats moving along homeward bound, keeping close in shore to be safe from wandering tide-currents that might pull them away. Around us rose the mountains sloping back from the sea. Not far away we could hear the ominous sound of the rapids, and feel the swell of its turbulent waters making our anchor chain creak and rattle. My friend Ross Price and I turned into our berths, thankful that we had been able to bring a little cheer into the lives of these lonely people.

Next morning we pulled up our "hook" and went off out to Jervis and up the Inlet to visit the logging-camp on the mountain-side overlooking Goliath Bay.

Three years afterwards, during which time I had always been a welcome guest at Fisher's on my rare visits to the Chuck, their eldest daughter asked me to officiate at her wedding. The ceremony was held in the same little house where I had tried to ask a blessing. The prayers that I offered at the wedding were the first that had ever been spoken aloud in that home.

After the knot was tied and they had received the usual felicitations, I called the couple aside to help me in filling out of the official forms required by the government for their records. In addition to other

information, a statement of the religious denomination of bride and groom is requested. When I asked the bride what I would put down for her she was stuck. She knew little or nothing about the Christian sects. At last she asked me what *my* church was. I replied, "Presbyterian." "Well," she said, "I don't know what Presbyterian means. It sounds like a mighty hard word to spell, but if you are one, and you can write it down, that's good enough for me!"

But I would be wronging these people of mine along these shores if I gave you the notion from this story that they are all opposed to the church or ignorant of what the church stands for. Many of them are sincere and intelligent believers. In general they are fine folk. They are remarkably well-informed on current affairs and questions of world-wide interest. Also they are often very evidently given to thinking things out for themselves. Perhaps their isolation explains that. Anyway, religious "Kindergarten talk" is not acceptable to them. The Fisher attitude is unusual, (although not at all unique), but I told their story because it brings out so distinctly what I find everywhere here, that common Christian kindness, leavened with ordinary tact, friendship after the type exemplified by Christ, will in time break through nearly all barriers.

CHAPTER XIV.

AMONG THE LOGGERS.

IT is estimated that the Province of British Columbia contains more than one-fourth of all the standing commercial timber under the British flag. In this province, therefore, the work carried on in its extensive forests of cedar, fir, spruce and hemlock gives to the phrase, "The Lumber Industry," an immense meaning. It is the second largest industry in the province, involving an expenditure and revenue of nearly seventy-five millions of dollars annually. Sixteen million feet of lumber is exported every month, and this is increasing rapidly. It touches an almost illimitable variety of occupations. Starting with workers in wood, carpenters or cabinet-makers handling the finished product, it takes us back through the retail and wholesale lumber business, into sawmills large and small, then to harbor tugs, and lastly aboard coastwise tugs hauling enormous rafts of logs down coast from beach booming-grounds. Then out from the mills in the other direction we can follow the logs and lumber going in vast quantities by transcontinental railways and ocean freighters to all the markets of the world, near and far. But the whole tremendous business must at last find its real source among men who

make saw-logs out of standing timber, the men who work in far-off logging camps on mountain slopes or in lonely valleys.

For eight years, summer and winter, I have travelled among these camps and it is of them I write.

Great changes have come over them in the last twenty years. The old days of the hand-loggers, the "bull-teams," and the little shore-camps, are almost past. The loggers are now miles back from the sea and have truck-roads, or serviceable standard-gauge railways, instead of skid-roads, to carry their logs to the "salt-chuck." Locomotives, mostly oil-burning, have replaced the oxen and horses of a few years ago. Big donkey-engines pulling heavy, extensive, expensive tackle, have forced the rope and peavy into a subordinate place. Enormous logs are rapidly dragged, by wire cables and "high-leads," hundreds of yards over rough ground, dangling in the air, helpless against the almost resistless power of specialized machinery. The logger now talks of high-leads, ground-yarding, boom-loading, duplex-loading, crotch-line loading, sky-lining, and tight-lining. Massive "blocks" are used weighing from half-a-ton down. There's the high-lead block, bull-block, loading-block and yarding-block, with smaller blocks and cable-lines of a dozen sorts.

Of course these complex operations demand a great variety of special workers. In the old camps you could

get along with fallers, buckers, bull-team drivers, hook-tenders, boom-men and cooks. The modern large camp in addition to these has to have rigging-slingers, chasers, chokermen, un-hookmen, loaders, tong-men, whistle-punks, donkey-punchers, locomotive drivers, firemen, barkemen, sandmen, pig-men, wood-splitters, bull-cooks, flunkeys, time-keepers, store-keepers, first-aid men, speeder-men, gas-boat men, blacksmiths, saw-filers, mechanics, section-gangs, graders, surveyors, camp-bosses, woods-bosses, and superintendents.

The personnel of the camps has changed very noticeably in one particular. The loggers used to be almost all English-speaking with some few who used Gaelic or French. Now every European language is represented in the camps, with Orientals, sometimes, in the cook-house. In many crews the majority of the men do not claim English as their mother-tongue.

The accommodations are much improved. The bunk-houses are not crowded. There are no double-tiers in them. They are cleaner and decidedly more comfortable. Hot and cold shower baths are found in all camps of any size, with convenient wash-houses. Sanitary arrangements are good. As a rule wholesome food, well-cooked, is served in full variety and in plenty. The meals are, of course, a charge against the men's wages.

And still the logging camps in the big timber make heavy demands upon the worker. Of late years it has

become undoubtedly the most risky occupation in British Columbia. The Workmen's Compensation Board pays a higher indemnity, per capita, in accident and death claims from logging than from any other industry. Machinery has forced the speeding-up of work and men find the strain and danger to be much more in evidence than in the old days.

Nor is it a natural life that men live when hived together in bunk-houses no matter how well-conditioned these places may be. The isolation of the camps is almost as great as ever for they are now far back from the shore.

We miss, too, the old fraternal relationship which existed between employer and men. There was a time when the boss was usually the owner, the camp was small, and his men were personally known to him. Now the working logger often never sees the owner. The camps have grown big. They have managers, superintendents and foremen. It is getting to be that the owners, usually a company, have little if any personal knowledge of their workmen. Nor have the men any particularly friendly interest in the owners. Company dividends are often the final and deciding tests of the value of a camp. If log prices drop so low that the directorate decides not to operate, the superintendent is instructed to close down and some hundreds of loggers are turned off, frequently with practically only a day's notice, to hunt another job. These men have

no say in the proposition. The money market governs. We all feel that human beings should not be considered simply as cost-units. We should think in terms of the larger profit which includes all human life. Indeed many syndicates have something of the larger view and act on it. Financial items are not the only ones considered. I have in mind a logging company, one of the largest here, whose camps are known along the coast as "The Old Men's Home." This concern gives generous treatment to its veteran workmen, regardless of whether they now are profitable to the company or not. Men who have grown old in the service are kept on as long as they want to stay. It is my humble opinion that it pays the company in the long run. It developes an *esprit-de-corps* and a loyalty that is bound to get substantially larger results in work accomplished. Much better than to have the so-called three crews, "one coming, one going, and one at work." Further, these older men can be depended upon to give conscientious service all the time. They need no supervision and few, if any, instructions, for they know their job every bit as well as the boss does. Years of hard work may have weakened their bodies but it has also made them expert woodsmen. Their blows with the axe may not be as vigorous as the younger man's, but they never waste a stroke, and probably at the end of the year the work they have done will surpass in quantity and excellence that of

the husky novice. These loggers of long experience can drop those colossal trees, trees that are often two hundred and fifty feet tall and eight to ten feet through, within inches, actually, of where they want them to lie, just as neatly and surely, comparatively, as a woman sets the dishes on the table for dinner. They go on with this work day in and day out for years. Rarely does a tree fall wrong even if the wind is strong and the ground lies bad. Many are the fancy tricks they can do. I have seen an old axeman throw a double-bitted axe a hundred feet and have it stick in a tree handle up or down just as you wished. They are masters of a worthy craft. Old or young they deserve our honor and respect.

It is not the purpose of these pages to enter fully, even if I could, into the labor problems of the logging industry, but there is one common thing I want to say. It has often been said, and, I suppose, will often have to be said again before much actual progress will be made in the solution of these really complicated problems.

I am thoroughly convinced that the road to better conditions for the workers and therefore for the great majority of those in the logging business, (for all, indeed, through reflex influences), will be found in the direction of genuine, active good will, and kindly, self-sacrificing consideration for the other fellow. This will inevitably lead to an honest and systematized at-

tempt to bridge the widening space between worker and operator. There are lots of sensible, Christian-minded, "square-shooting" men on both sides. These are the men, if they can come together and get action, wise and progressive, who will infuse into the industry the leaven of mutual understanding and real co-operation between owner and wage-earner. Once you have that spirit in any industry methods will emerge in due course to give it practical expression.

I am often asked if I meet many "Reds" among the men in the settlements and camps, the tone in which the question is put implying that these characters must be bad, traitorous vagabonds. Frequently I do run into ranting fellows whose grievances, when analyzed, are simply a hatred of the rich because the latter have "beaten them to it." They are greedy and unscrupulous and wouldn't mind promoting and participating in a revolution, no matter how tragic and destructive, if only it gave them a chance to grab the prizes of wealth or power that they covet for themselves. These men are bandits. They are the enemies of any form of organized society. They are not, however, a real menace. They have little influence and often become a nuisance in a bunk-house. They usually make a loud, prolonged, and blasphemous noise which has neither variety nor harmony in it. With such a crude and selfish anarchist one can have no affiliation.

But I meet other men, sober-minded, well in-

formed, careful thinkers, who are convinced that radical changes could be made in the principles and machinery of government which would be of immense benefit to us. The common practice of calling such men dangerous is surely begotten of ignorance or panic. No intelligent person would claim that there is no room for improvement in present democratic institutions of government, industry, or society. We were not alarmed when the buggy was discarded for the motor-car, nor would we be startled if someone advised that railroads should now be superseded by motor transport and aeroplanes. Why then should we become "jumpy" when criticism by thoughtful men, of existing institutions, takes definite, constructive form? Earnest endeavor after thorough-going remedies for social ills is surely a far healthier condition of loyal citizenship than to be so timid, or mentally lazy, so ignorant and frivolous, or so greedy, as to want things left just as they are, refusing to consider, on its merits, any suggested change.

If we believe there is actually a "bolshevist" conflagration sweeping across Europe towards us, surely the only effective way to meet the peril is by starting a back-fire of progressive reform of our own kind, suited to our own people and their peculiar needs.

Everyone knows that the national leaders of Christ's day looked upon Him as a dangerous fellow. They saw clearly that His teaching was radical and

upsetting. It involved a reconstruction of society in the interests of common humanity and righteousness. His theory of life, if carried through, would be fatal to all forms of parasitism, false standards, and greed. It would take away pelf and power from all who held them unjustly. The strong would have to bear the burdens of the weak, the poor and needy would have first consideration, people would be of more value than dividends. To get rid of this Troubler they killed Him. To the leaders of Church and State of His day, Jesus was a "Red." This does not mean that every so-called reformer is right; many of them are real hindrances to progress. But it should teach us wisdom, and give us poise, so that we shall not be stampeded into either wholesale condemnation or unthinking approval.

There are valid grounds for optimism in the whole industrial and social situation in the world. Men are coming into leadership who show keen insight and eager, elastic minds. They recognize that ownership is a social trust. They are strongly influenced by motives of service as well as of gain. They are accepting the principle of "reciprocity of service" in its widest application. Among labor leaders intellectual ability, social devotion, wide vision, and balance judgment, are more in evidence than ever before.

Many schemes, revolutionary, evolutionary, and opportunist, have been proposed as remedies for social

maladies. If any plans succeed, new or old, it will have to be by substituting the Golden Rule for the Rule of Gold. In the whole, wide sphere of human interests the problems are so numerous, intricate, and so difficult to even understand, that sometimes I feel the complete solution is beyond our reach. But we refuse to give up in our attempts to realize our ideals. We can, at least, affirm that, if we are to save humanity from retrogression or wreck, we must get farther and farther away from the "Law of the Jungle," so called, and more fully under the "Law of the Neighborhood," which is the "Law of Christ."

God, give us men! A time like this demands
Strong minds, true hearts, great faith, and ready hands.
Men whom the lust of lucre cannot kill,
Men whom the spoils of office cannot buy,
Men who have opinions, and a will,
Men who have honor, men who will not lie.
Men who can stand before a demagogue
And damn his treacherous flatteries without winking.
Tall men, sun-crowned, who live above the fog
In public duty and in private thinking.
For while the rabble with its well-worn creed,
Its large profession and its little deed,
Mingles in useless strife, lo, Freedom weeps,
Wrongs curse our Land, and Justice, tired waiting, sleeps.
God, give us men!

CHAPTER XV.

CAMP INCIDENTS.

I WOULD like to give an incident or two that stand out vividly in my recollection of these recent years among the loggers. Camps have differences, I mean in character and atmosphere. And the character of the same camp will change from time to time for various causes. But in my first year among them they all seemed alike in one particular, they were cold and unresponsive to my ministrations. Often, those first months, I would have quit the job if I could have done so honorably. I was a stranger and a preacher, and these facts were a handicap which produced results that gave me a sore heart many times. Yet now, after seven years' experience and looking back with fuller knowledge than I had at the beginning, I wish to state here emphatically that I have never received any other than fair and generous treatment from any logging camp I have visited. Any preacher who has been otherwise treated must have been guilty, as I have been at times, knowingly or unknowingly, of some tactless, angering, hurtful word or act; or has adopted an irritating self-righteous attitude; or has voiced some form of bigotry that had overmuch of the name of Christ and little of His spirit.

It is easy to tell the toiler
How best to carry his pack.
But no one can rate
A burden's weight,
Until it has been on his back.

It is easy to sit on horse back
And counsel the man on foot.
But get down and walk,
And you'll change your talk,
When you feel the peg in your boot.

Having, I hope, safe-guarded myself from misunderstanding let me tell a story or two about a visit I made to one of the camps that first year. We'll call it Camp "Z," fifteen miles back in the mountains. I had arrived on the empty logging train from the beach in the afternoon, had found the foreman and got his permission to have service, had consulted with the cook and decided that half-past seven would see the dishes washed and the place clear for my meeting. Then I put up a notice on the wash-house door.

After supper I went around to all the bunk-houses introducing myself as well as I could, and inviting them to my meeting. I entered one of the bunk-houses and, standing near the door, spoke out something as follows: "Men, my name is George Pringle. I'm a minister. I have arranged to have preaching in the cookhouse about seven-thirty. I shall ring the gong at that time and I hope all who can will turn out." I stood silent a moment, sizing up the men, and hoping

for something to give me a natural opening to get into closer contact with them. In about half-a-minute a big fellow stretched out on a bunk at my right called out in resounding tones, "Are you through with your speech?" "Yes," I said, "I only wanted to invite you all to my meeting." "I'm not asking you what you said," he replied, "I asked if you're through talking." "Yes," I said, "I am." "Well, then," he thundered, "we don't want to hear your nonsense. So please get to hell out of this, and jump to it!" This man is now one of my friends, a good fellow, and if you knew his history and the circumstances that happened to make my entrance into the bunk-house that night peculiarly annoying to him, you would excuse his discourtesy. He has come out to hear my "nonsense" more than once, and I am sure wouldn't want me to go to hell!

I recall another camp where, on the occasion of my initial visit, the cookhouse was rather crowded at meals. One of the waiters showed me to a vacant place on the bench at one of the tables and I sat down. Just then I noticed a man about my own age, a tired hungry-appearing fellow who had come in late, looking for a seat. There was none just at hand so I got up and said, "You take my seat, I haven't been working and can wait." He must have heard there was a preacher in camp and guessed I was the "critter," for he growled back, "I don't want your damned seat. If I had my

way with you holy parasites I'd make you work or starve." He had developed a nasty grouch and of course a stray preacher was a good target for evil temper. We were strangers to each other then. He wouldn't talk that way to me now. Friendship makes a vast difference. He would give me his last dollar if I needed it.

In spite of these and other kindred incidents, seeing in true perspective the many and varied experiences of these years, I now give it as my considered conviction that I am far more indebted to the loggers than they are to me. I have received from them a thousand tokens of friendship in countless forms of word and deed that make the service I have tried to give look very poor and trivial.

One February I spent a week in a group of camps on Vancouver Island eighteen miles from the sea. During my visit the weather turned extremely cold. At Camp "H" the lake, into which they had been yarding, froze solid. We had a meeting in the cook-house on Sunday evening with a good crowd out. A big fire was burning in the stove. I was just coming to the "application", (that's where the preacher says he means *you!*), the fellows seemed to be listening when suddenly one of them sprang to his feet and pointed to the roof. We all looked and saw flames brightly blazing around the almost red-hot pipe. That ended the sermon, and there had to be some snappy work done

before the fire was put out. Two years before, at Lang Bay, while I was preaching the window blew in, and the wall-paper fell off the walls, but never before had my "hot-air" set the place on fire!

That cold night I slept cozily in the most comfortable place in the camp. The boss forced me to take his bed. He is an older man than I and an Irish Roman Catholic. He hunted up a much less comfortable berth in one of the bunkhouses.

Next day I crossed to Camp "B." The weather moderated and brought down a heavy fall of snow. It piled up three feet deep. This meant that I had to stay at Camp "B" for a few days, whether I wanted to or not, until the locomotive got through with the plow. They made me very welcome. Lawrence fixed me up a good bed and Jim Gray, a sourdough friend, gave me his heavy black-bear robe so that I was snug and warm at night.

Of course no work could be done. One evening I preached, the next I talked Klondike for a couple of hours. During the following days I roamed around the bunk-houses "chewing the rag," exchanging ideas on a hundred different subjects mostly centering around sociology, economics, and world-affairs. To be sure a good deal of it was just the ordinary gossip of the coast camps. I listened to much good talk, opinions, and descriptions, educative and interesting. Many of the men had travelled in distant lands and had

gone into strange, odd corners of the earth, some had had unique and startling careers. I recollect there was a big Scot named McLaren who had been a policeman in Hong Kong. Another chap, an Englishman, had been call-boy for Sir Martin Harvey in London. These are only illustrations of the infinite variety of types. Naturally lots of humorous stories were told, some that would bear repeating and some that would not. Now and again I would get into a friendly argument. In some of these I held my own, in others I came off second best, or was merely an "also-ran."

In one of the groups I found that the church had been under discussion, and after I entered the bunk-house we proceeded to enlarge upon the subject. A number of fellows came in from other bunk-houses and we had two or three hours of a real, round-table, unrestricted free-for-all debate about religion and its worth or worthlessness to the ordinary man. In another chapter I try to give you an impression of this discussion but there is not room in this one to do more than mention it.

So I had a very happy time there, snow-bound in the mountains. Perhaps the men were not disposed to find very much fault with a minister who was willing, by song, story, or sermon, to help them to kill time those tiresome days. Whatever the reason they treated me right royally. I was nearly ready to quit preaching and ask the boss for a job in the camp, I was feeling

so completely at home! Hard to say what would have happened. But the logging train got through at last and I went down with it on the return trip to the beach where the *Sky Pilot,* my "floating home" was moored.

CHAPTER XVI.

STRAIGHT TALK.

IN the preceding chapter I told you about being storm-stayed in Camp "B" and mentioned that one evening I had gone into a bunkhouse where a group had been talking "about religion." At their invitation I sat down and for three hours we opened our hearts to one another on that subject.

"We were discussing the Bible, churches, and Christianity just before you came in, Mr. Pringle," said Sorenson, one of the fallers, "and we would like you to hear our opinions and then we'll listen to yours. Nearly all of us have been brought up to go to church, some of us have drifted away through force of circumstance, bad habits, or careless living. Many of us, too, through reading, debate, and experience, have gradually found ourselves unable honestly to believe in the commonly accepted church creeds. One of the men has put it this way, 'I would rather go to hell with an honest mind, than do violence to my intelligence in order to get to heaven.' Some have been defending the church, and many other opposing ideas have been expressed. There has been some free speech handed out in the last half-hour, and we thought if you came

around we would have some straight talk with you. Perhaps you can contribute some ideas that will help us to a common-sense, fair-minded, free-minded verdict on this question of religion.

"Well," I replied, "go to it!"

And so they did. I cannot reproduce all the arguments, nor give you the play of mind against mind; there was a kind of orderly disorder, interruptions, several speaking at once, but through it all there were some clear notes struck which had force and conviction in them. It is these I will try to present.

The Bible was attacked because, they affirmed, it was full of stories and miracles hard to believe; it was self-contradictory in places, especially in the Old Testament; and worst of all it offended our judgment of moral right and wrong. David, called by the Bible "a man after God's own heart," was guilty of the rotten trick of putting a brave soldier into a place where he would be surely killed in order that this good David might get his widow. Solomon, held up as a wise man, was an extreme polygamist and an idolater. Jacob called "a Prince with God" was really a swindler. One writer, supposed to be inspired of God, counts that man happy who shall "dash the enemy's children against the rocks," and another sweet-tempered saint looks forward with joy to the day when he shall "bathe his feet in the blood of the wicked." So what use could reasonable men have for a book whose heroes are oc-

casionally implicated in lying, cruelty, treachery, adultery, and murder?

Nor did the Bible experts agree about its teaching. It certainly couldn't teach anything very clearly when there were so many presumably honest Christians who differed about its message. Its meaning is ambiguous or there wouldn't be so many religious sects each claiming to have "the real dope."

And there is no agreement as to what books the Bible was really composed of. There is the Protestant Bible, and there is the Catholic, which has more books in it than the other. There are authorized versions and revised versions, as well as a lot of other translations all differing in many important passages. So that it was really impossible for the ordinary man to know for sure what the real Bible is, let alone accept it as a true guide in his inner life.

Then the churches had their turn in the bombardment. It was maintained that during the Dark Ages the church had been principally engaged in torturing and killing heretics and stifling freedom of intellect and conscience. When the church became practically a unit, had full control of the nations of the world, and had a chance to show what it could do, it failed utterly in lightening the burdens of the people. It became immensely enriched at their expense and developed a huge mass of legendary superstition and formalism. The Renaissance came only when the intel-

lectuals were strong enough to break the chains of fear and ignorance with which the church had bound them. Humanity then commenced its toilsome forward march again, dragging the church with it.

In the Industrial Revolution in England, the latter half of the nineteenth century, when the Earl of Shaftesbury was carrying on his campaign of publicity which ultimately forced the factory owners to mitigate the conditions of child-labor in their mills, he didn't have the support of the church as a unit. It opposed him or was lukewarm. Shaftesbury writes, "From the clergy I received no support or next to none. As a body, or even numerously, they are doing and will do nothing. In Manchester the clergy are cowed by capital and power." Wilberforce had as much hindrance as help from the church in freeing the slaves. The Bible and the church were lined up both for and against slavery in the American Civil War.

In fact doesn't history show that the stronger and wealthier the churches got the more they were opposed to progress? So far as we know it has never tried or has never been able to prevent a war in all its history, but has often instigated and encouraged them. The last Great War was altogether worked up through the positive efforts or culpable inaction of kings, emperors, and statesmen, who were professing Christians and regular church goers. The church may have had some influence for good but this has been more than counter-

balanced by its evil influence, or has produced, at best, a stalemate.

Its support rests heavily on every nation, although it is getting to be carried more and more by the capitalists as the worker gets wise and crawls from under. Billions of real dollars are, however, still needed to keep it going that could far better be used in a dozen humanitarian reforms that are badly needed but are withheld through lack of funds.

It doesn't seem to be needed in national life or individual life for there are lots of good men who are not churchmen. If we can do without the church why not eliminate the burdensome institution as speedily as people can be educated up to it. Even in the logging camps all the improvements in the last twelve years such as single-tier bunks, good feeding, bath and wash-houses, workmen's compensation, came without the slightest apparent help from the church.

Nor do men who believe in a God find it necessary to go to church to worship him.

One keen chap argued that the best that could be claimed for the church and religion was that it served to police the people in the childhood period of human history, until mankind should learn to seek and practice truth for its own sake without any dread of God or hell. God and the Church were the Santa Claus and Christmas Tree in human development. Just as the kiddies think that Santa gives the presents and

puts them on the Christmas Tree for you, so we have thought that there is a God who gives the good things of life and we get them through some form of church membership. Now we are rapidly learning that we only get what we go after ourselves or what other people may give to us. The church is not the source or necessary vehicle of these benefits. We would get the good things of life in larger measure if the immense resources used up in running the machinery of the vast church establishments were turned directly into humane channels by the state.

Such were some of the stronger attacks made upon church and Bible. Extreme Communism also had its advocates. The arguments were put much more vividly and elaborately than my resumé presents them. I have only indicated, as fairly as possible, the main lines of attack. Nor have I mentioned the many cheap jibes in which ill-will and dense ignorance were shown. I have given only the thoughtful arguments used on that occasion by good, honorable men. It may serve to give some degree of prominence to the questions that are being considered by many tens of thousands of workers throughout Canada.

What answers did I make? Let me first assure you that I had to speak straight. No sophistry would go. It would have been detected immediately. A man, professing to be a minister of Christ, was on trial that night as well as the church. It was much more serious

for him than for the institution he represented, although they were both involved. I frankly admitted what I knew to be true in their arraignment, and flatly denied what I knew was false. I had no books, companions, or "atmosphere" to help me. I couldn't escape if I had wanted to. I had no time, of course, to consult authorities. The fight was on! When I didn't know I acknowledged my ignorance, when I did know I refused to be dislodged. I carefully avoided the constant temptation of making disguised guesses in finding answers, for there were men there who could check up my statements then or later on. Trying to bolster up my case with spurious information or doctored quotations would cause me to "lose face," a result that no temporary success in debate could compensate for. They would surely "get" me later. Sometimes I laid aside the confusing question in order to answer the questioner, sometimes I ignored the belligerent mood of the questioner in order to answer a real stumbling-block in his question. Sometimes I couldn't answer either question or questioner. There was scarcely any occasion for me to lose my temper or self-control. There were no personalities and when criticism of the value of my own work as a class-representative was offered I was definitely assured that no personal affront was intended.

In trying to summarize my replies it is simply impossible for me to give the setting. Often ideas were

brought out in the form of brief, sharp, question and answer. Sometimes I would side with them, sometimes they with me. Nor were the men by any means all of one mind. Now and again the "main circus" was closed until an attractive "side-show" argument was ended. Jokes were thrown back and forth, and I am sure if you had been there you would have voted the evening one of the most stirring, instructive, and interesting you had ever had.

CHAPTER XVII.

MY ANSWER.

I READILY admitted that the old childhood idea of a dead-level, equal value, unhistorical interpretation of the Bible was, to me, impossible. We must recognize its time-perspective if we would be honest and true to the facts. The Bible was not a book but a library. It contained about sixty books, some of them folk-lore, some history, some philosophy, some poetry, some mixed, and some hard to classify. The variety of translations didn't really affect the main messages. They actually helped in understanding the original. Nor did the few books of little value, found in some Bibles and not in others, add or subtract anything of much worth.

The Bible gave, you might say, a "cross-section" of the search of mankind for higher ideals and the growth of ability to appreciate them, from the time, ages ago, when we first lifted our faces from the mud, and commenced to dimly feel after something more in life than the things the body needs or craves. That for which men's souls hungered, at first ill-defined and coarsely imagined, they called the divine. They began with many gods, each tribe having its own favored

group. As time passed on Israel reached the idea of one god. He was their tribal deity, supreme in battle over the gods of other tribes. Then gradually emerges the vision of one God of all mankind, and one alone, supreme in the universe.

Also the conception of the character of God has undergone radical changes and development. It has gone from crude and childish notions, on and on to purer heights, until to-day in Jesus the great mass of enlightened people find God and it satisfies them. Personally I do not see how any good man can refuse to give Christ his admiration, his love, and his loyal allegiance.

The Bible, Catholic, Protestant, or any Version, is, therefore, the presentation in outline of the progressive search of humanity for that Divine Spirit in whom the deepest longings of our hearts can find rest. This search for God is the most profound, most tremendous influence of all history. It exists among all tribes and races, savage or civilized, and persists throughout all the generations of mankind. We may not be able to explain its origin or its ultimate meaning, but its actuality and power in the lives of men cannot be brushed aside by a curse or a joke.

So the Bible gives the high-lights of this age-long search until in Jesus of Nazareth humanity finds its quest ended and its heart at peace. That doesn't mean that every problem of life and death is solved, or that

the complete character of God is comprehended. It is impossible, I fancy, for God to expose Himself or His plans in all fullness to us, or for us to comprehend His meaning if He did. The best way to let us know all we need to know is through a Living Person from whose words and life flow wonderful Light and boundless Love. This I find in Christ.

The heroes of the Old Testament were surely guilty, sometimes, of shameful conduct. But don't you see that this truthful recital of both bad and good deeds is a proof that the Bible gives a faithful picture? It hasn't been "fixed" so as to tell only the pleasing things. It tells the whole story. It is true to the facts of human nature and human experience. Also, if you would be fair, David and the other patriarchs, to whom reference has been made, must be seen in the light of their own day. They stand pre-eminent among the people of their own time. It is true they sinned deplorably but in every case you have mentioned they deeply repented of their sin.

I love the Bible and place it above all other books. But there is much in it I do not understand, and I have read most of it in its original tongues. There is also a great deal of it I do understand, yet even parts of that have no message that I can fit into my own life. But there is enough in it, if it were only a dozen pages, that comes to me as "cold waters to a thirsty soul, as good news from a far country." If your Bible consists only

of the parable of the Prodigal Son and the parable of the Good Samaritan, with Christ Himself as the Living Interpretation of them, that's enough to satisfy an honest intellect, a humble heart, and put you on the trail of Real Life.

If you are in earnest in your search for the truth, then lay aside, temporarily at least, the contradictions, inconsistencies, and problems of interpretation, and get to the heart of the thing and taste that. You do not need to know all about the marvels of electricity before you will turn the switch on and enjoy the light. One winter morning in the Yukon I sat down to my breakfast with the thermometer registering sixty degrees below zero. I was hungry as a bear. It happened that I found a button in my porridge! I didn't try to swallow the button. I laid it aside and thankfully ate the food. Later in the day I found a place for the button and sewed it on. Don't be so stupid as to discard the Bible because you find that in it which you can't swallow. Some day, too, when you grow older and learn more of life, you may discover the meaning of that which was once a puzzle. You don't throw a fish away because it has bones in it that will choke you if you try to swallow them. Treat this wonderful book at least as fairly as you treat a fish or your porridge.

You have given the church a bad doing. Let me admit right here that a lot of it is deserved. The organized church, bearing the name of Christ, has, at

times, done the work of the devil. And yet every organization with a history running back for several centuries is bound to have dark pages in its records. Even at that these pages are only dark in the light of the higher standards of morality of to-day. Often you will find that those pages are not dark when compared with customs of the generation in which they were written. You wouldn't destroy the British nation because it has been, at times, controlled by cruel, dissolute, or ignorant monarchs. You wouldn't extirpate Germany because she has been led to commit some terrible crimes. Deal as fairly with the church in your discussions. I am not a Bible-worshipper, nor a church-worshipper, but as a fair-minded reader of history and a close-up student of mankind, I am forced to give both church and Bible the honor due unto them for their part in the development of the finer qualities dormant in human nature.

I affirm with absolute certainty that never has Christ been responsible for any cruelty, or cowardice, or bigotry, or the throttling of knowledge. The shameful things done by the church at times, and the noble things left undone, have been wholly due to the hardness of men's hearts and the blindness of their minds. Read for yourselves and see, learn for yourselves at first-hand, the truth about the character of Jesus, and I defy you to say that He would ever countenance anything mean, or base, or cruel.

The reasonable explanation is simply that the church is necessarily composed of imperfect people. Therefore being imperfect these people are often controlled by wicked motives and unchristian ideas, which leads the organization to give its authority to unworthy deeds. Every human group with high ideals is troubled the same way. It is therefore grossly unfair to lay the faults of the church at the feet of Christ.

Now, on the other hand, the Christian church, with all its mistakes, has ever had its many faithful witnesses for nobler things. There is a golden, unbroken thread, running down from Christ, of thousands and thousands of men and women in the church, who lived heroically and beautifully, spoke bravely, and witnessed truly for their Saviour.

The different religious denominations are gradually getting clear or their old hostile attitude, and recognizing that truth can be seen from many varying angles. That Christ appeals in different ways to different minds, temperaments, nations, conditions of life, and periods of history. That "there is one Christ and we all need Him, there are many Christs and we need them all."

Let me clear up the confusion I see in your thinking about Christ and the church. There is a distinction between the religion *of* Jesus and the religion *about* Jesus. The religion of Jesus can be likened to a picture without a frame. In the picture there are two

roads. Along one of them a forgiving father is coming to meet a wayward son who has turned his steps back home. On the other road you can see one man bending over to help another who has been badly hurt and robbed by highwaymen. Jesus actually lived that religion, the religion of Two Roads. One road reveals God as our Father who, with infinite love, comes to us to make it possible for us to find our way home. The other road, with its never-to-be-forgotten little story of the Good Samaritan, shows us our task as followers of the Man who went about doing good. The first road is God's task—to save us. The second road is our task—to help others in common ways with our hearts in it.

Now you may put any other thing you like into the picture that harmonizes with the ideas of the two roads, or leave what you like out, or change the perspective and shading, but if you omit the two roads it isn't the Jesus religion, and if you have the two roads and nothing else you will still have enough.

The churches have framed the picture in a hundred different ways, realizing rightly that a suitable frame improves the picture and brings out its beauty. These frames are the different formal creeds, the ceremonies, the organizations, by which the churches seek to express the full detail of their ideas about Christ. They represent the religion about Jesus as the frame is about the picture. In many cases I cannot

tell exactly where the frame ends and the picture begins, but still the large distinction is clear. Sometimes the frame is so massive, ornate, and loud, and has so much beautiful drapery hanging from it, that it beclouds or actually hides the picture. While I believe in the value of a proper frame, yet if I had to choose between a picture with an ugly or unsuitable one, and a picture without any frame at all, I would certainly choose the latter.

One of you asked me if I believed "this heaven and hell stuff." I answer that I am reasonably sure there is a heaven into the suburbs of which a man enters as soon as he turns along the right road. One gets a taste of heaven in the glow we have after doing a kind deed or resisting a temptation to act selfishly. If kind thoughts and acts develop into a habit, and that into a character approaching Christ's, then we are getting out of the environs and into the City of Pure Delight. Of course the idea of a "city" is figurative. Locality and visible form are not essentials of heaven. Heaven is a state of spiritual harmony with God. All that Jesus says about heaven is that "in His Father's house are many mansions." I shall be content if, by God's grace, I am given;

> Some lowly place amid Thy many mansions,
> Some sheltering shade where sin and striving cease,
> And flows forever, through Heaven's green expansions,
> The river of Thy Peace.

I am sure there is a hell. I have seen men in it on earth. There was Fraser (not his real name) of the Yukon. When a young lad he had sat on the same bench in school with Rudyard Kipling. He was doing well in the Civil Service in India when the Klondike craze captured him. He was a splendid man physically, mentally, and morally. He mined on Gold Bottom in my day and we became intimate friends. He fell in love with a Dawson dance-hall girl. He was in earnest. She bled him white and then shook him. It hurt him cruelly. Several times he came into my cabin and tried to tell me about it. It was torture to us both. He was in hell, a real hell of spiritual suffering. I tried my poor best to ease his terrible burden. But he was so genuine and so whole-souled in his loving that the vampire's treatment of him tore his heart-strings. I came home one day to find Fraser lying on my cabin floor, dead. He had blown his brains out. Yes, without a doubt, there is a hell on earth and whether the same laws operate beyond death or not is a problem which I don't care to take any unnecessary chances. Did Fraser go to that hell commonly spoken of as being beyond the grave? I am sure he did not. If I had had his burden to carry I would have "quit" long before he did.

But I have for years given over the practice of deciding a final destiny for any man. If I see what I think to be evil in the world I will oppose it, and,

likewise, must oppose any man who clings to that evil. But committing men to any ultimate and irrevocable hell is an altogether different thing in which I refuse any longer to mix. Let God decide that. He judges us with infinite mercy and lovingkindness, and with perfect knowledge, a knowledge and love unattainable in fullness by any human being. An Edinburgh poet puts it beautifully in the form of a dialogue between two ministers :—

"Where have you been, my brother,
For I have missed you from the street?"

"I have been away, for a week and a day,
On the Lord God's Judgment Seat."

"And what did you find, my brother,
When your judging there was done?"

"Weeds in my garden, dust in my doors,
And my roses dead in the sun.
And the lesson I brought back with me,
Like Silence, from Above,
That upon the Throne, there is room alone,
For the God whose name is Love."

The churches of Christ to-day, it is true, receive and control enormous wealth. But it is got by honest means. It is given freely by sensible, well-intentioned people, well-informed as to the use which is being made of their money. That money is used for the erection, furnishing, and upkeep of buildings where millions can gather together weekly to hear the Jesus-message, of

Hope and Love from God, and Brotherhood among men. No amount of money can be considered wasted which keeps alive and operative such great thoughts so essential to heart-happiness, to noble character, and to social progress. It sends its adherents out constantly, with renewed consecration, to battle against despair, greed, jealousy, lust, and a thousand other devils of like nature.

The Soviet government, controlled by a group of Intellectuals who call themselves "workers," is being forced by the real workers of Russia, the peasants, who compose eighty per cent. of the population, to permit the people to satisfy the natural hunger of their spiritual nature for the religion of Christ; a religion which teaches true brotherhood, and offers those deep consolations in divine forgiveness and hope of immortality which the human heart thirsts for with inextinguishable longing.

There are now very few "established" churches in the world whose support comes from the state. They are almost all "free." This makes them completely dependent upon the voluntary givings of the intelligent common people. How the people are responding can be seen in the enormous proportionate increase in membership and contributions in the last fifty years.

And, by the way, there is no business enterprise on earth that has anything like as low a running cost as the church, when you take into account its immense

work, and its widespread influence among all nations in every phase of life. Its professional, full-time workers are poorly paid in money. It has very many millions of eager, unpaid workers who receive no money-pay at all.

When you get the detail as to the work the churches are doing for the help of mankind it should shut the mouth of bitter criticism. It is the only agency that is ungrudgingly giving its time, energy, and money, without asking any material dividends, for the proclamation of noble ideals, and at the same time trying to practise what it preaches. It tries to give its children clean, well-furnished minds, teaches them to love Jesus, and what could be better? It trains young people in unselfish living and service, and urges men everywhere to live virtuously and honorably. In the home-lands it is foremost in helping all who need help and that without hope of any financial return.

In foreign lands it has brought the only message, in its missionary doctors, nurses, hospitals, schools, and evangelists, that has nothing to do with money-making, territorial aggrandisement, exploitation, or vice. Foreign Missions is the only olive-branch of pure friendship and unselfish brotherhood that the West holds out to the East. It may be the means, yet, of saving Western civilization from future destruction at the hands of great Eastern races who are only dimly commencing to realize their power.

The church has always been, consciously or unconsciously, willingly or unwillingly, the friend of the masses. You can't have Christ in any creed, ceremony, sermon, or symbol, and stifle His voice completely. And His voice always speaks on behalf of the downtrodden and oppressed.

That last is a dogmatic statement and I'll have to leave it for you to expand and consider. Without labouring the argument of the infinite blessing Christ has brought, through the church, to the common people, let me give you a homely illustration, from my own life and memory, of an amazing thing the church has done for the workingmen of the British Empire.

When I was a little boy I remember how my father used to leave home early in the morning to be at his work-bench at seven o'clock. He toiled until noon, walked home on his own time, ate his dinner, walked back on his own time to be ready to work when the one o'clock whistle blew. He kept at it until six in the evening. This went on every day of the week. But on Saturday night he laid aside his tools, and for two nights and a day he was his own man. He had one free day a week, fifty-two days a year, or nearly two months holidays in every twelve! This was secured to him all his long laborious life. What a priceless boon to him and his family! No employer ever ventured successfully to take it from him. Like him there were hundreds of thousands of working men in

Canada to whom the principle of one day's rest in seven was assured. When you commence to try to calculate the benefits, material, mental, and moral, that accrued to the many millions of workingmen, in the British Empire alone, in those long centuries, through this rest-day, you find the sum so enormous that it is beyond calculation or even beyond exaggeration. Labor unions in those times were either non-existent or in their infancy. What institution then secured this rest-day of such incalculable value to the common man, and protected it from the inroads of commercialism? Every honest, straight-thinking man can give but one answer, "It was the Christian Church." I maintain, therefore, for that reason alone, the church has earned the gratitude and respect of all well-informed workers.

Here is another amazing help the church has been to common men. Over three hundred years ago the church, (in Scotland), established complete democratic government within its own communion. It was the first organization, secular or sacred, to do this successfully and permanently. Women, too, were given equal voting privileges with men. Democratic ideas were not popular with the rulers of nations then. Thousands were persecuted and many were put to death for proclaiming and adhering to these ideas. Eventually these principles conquered. They are commonplace now. But the honor must be given to the church for fighting the first cruel battles in popularizing democracy.

Here is something more. For these three centuries that same church has employed educated men, trained in the finest scholarship the best universities of the world could supply, to minister to the people all over Scotland. Think what an advantage, immense beyond estimating, it has been to that country to have these very highly educated men, of choice spirit, living amongst the people of every city, village, and country district. Twice every Sunday, through these many years, the whole community gathered in church and heard two long addresses filled with high ideals, expressed in beautiful language that the hearers understood, conclusions carefully reasoned, and with a background of erudition and fine culture. During the week the minister visited in the homes and conversed with the people on intimate terms. Apart from its moral and religious values, it meant that all the men, women, and children, poor and rich, in Scotland, were really extra-mural University students for more than three hundred years. Their ministers were, in effect, University Extension lecturers! In those days books and an education were rarely within reach of the common people. The church was the only corporate body which sought earnestly, and with magnificent success, to bring some of the stores of learning to ordinary folk in chapel and common-school. For a long period of centuries that church afforded the only open arena the people had for the free expression of advanced

opinion. Indeed it might, I think, be fairly said that, in Scotland at least, the church has done more for the assertion and protection of the people's rights, the extension of their privileges, the training of their intellects, and the shaping of noble character, than any institution of any kind has ever done in all history for the rank-and-file of any nation.

You have referred to Shaftesbury's disappointment because he sometimes received lukewarm support from the organized churches in some communities. On the other side consider, first, that his reforms seemed very radical, second, it takes time to educate people to realize the needs of others whose lives are lived under different conditions from their own, third, that all his supporters were church people and his reforms were made possible only because enough church members did rally to his banner.

It is true, of course, that improvement of conditions for workers in the world of industry, past and present, was not always due directly to the action of the church or its official representatives. But in almost every case the leading reformer, like Shaftesbury, was a member of the church. Shaftesbury was a prominent leader of the Evangelical party in the Anglican Church. He was one of the founders of the Y.M.C.A., took an active interest in Foreign Missions, and was president of several religious societies in London. Then you will find, if you think into it, that

the church has done that more difficult thing of creating and developing such a strong and wide-spread public sentiment of kindness and practical brotherhood that the voice of the reformer found his demands echoed and supported by thousands of Christian hearts. Without that body of Christian opinion behind him no leader could accomplish anything of permanent worth.

This changing of the hearts of men and developing Christ-likeness of spirit in a nation is a slow process of generations. To be thorough I suppose it must be slow. But from a Christ-way of thinking in national and inter-national affairs, produced through constant iteration of the Jesus-teaching, there is certain to grow all kinds of reforms, which lift heavy burdens, open blind eyes, unstop deaf ears, give life in place of death, literally and figuratively, and in a thousand, thousand ways bring wider measures of love, joy, liberty, and light, to common people in the common ways of life.

One of you has recited and approved the well-known dogmas of extreme communism. There may be much we can learn from a sympathetic study of the Russian Soviet experiment. But I do not intend to wear a smock and let my beard grow simply because someone says they do it in Russia! Karl Marx is an economist with many wise, illuminating ideas. But the Marxian theory is fundamentally wrong when it

seeks to ride rough-shod through the intricacies of life, with one class riding and the rest trampled on. It is a form of antiquated reactionary barbarism. Its real nature is masked with a modern, detachable wise-looking complexion, giving the appearance of wholesome youth to ancient and dishonorable social principles. It would throw away everything, no matter how valuable or potent in human development, that doesn't fit in with the narrow-gauge scheme. It glorifies the dictum that "to the victors belong the spoils." It doesn't seek to do away with the barbaric dog-eat-dog system, which it says exists, but proposes to change, not the nature, but simply the position of the dogs. The top-dog goes under and the under-dog gets its turn on top! The vicious principles of hate and antagonism and brute-force are left unchanged or encouraged. It gives no consolation to the sorrowing heart; and the world is full of sorrowing hearts. When compared to the main teachings of Jesus, Marx is superficial and an opportunist, his theory is limited in application and clearly unfair. Christ is the true radical. He locates the real tap-root of evil when he points the devils in men's hearts. I am a rationalist and free-thinker. I follow the rules of logic and have no unworthy strings on my thinking. Considering all the evidence, thinking these questions through, and testing them by my own experience and observation, I am continually coming to the same conclusion. It

is that Christ is the only guide who gives an acceptable goal, and a road leading to it, that satisfies my deepest and noblest desires for myself and for my fellowmen.

When I come to the end of my life, if I have time and ability to think, I am positive, that although I shall be sorry for many things I have said and done, I shall never regret trying to follow Christ. What more can a man ask than Christ offers us, a Way that we know is right, a Destination that the heart of man craves, and a Guarantee, through God's Love evidenced supremely in the Atonement, that we shall ultimately arrive.

Heart and intellect I am for Christ and organized Christianity. The Church upholds Christ to all the world in word and work. His likeness is beclouded and distorted at times by earth-born fogs of hypocrisy, bigotry, formalism, and ignorance. But you can find Him even then shining through the fog if you will but seek. Very, very often, however, He is presented with clarity, beauty, and convincing power.

Christ is continually capturing thousands of new hearts. He stimulates His disciples, old and new, to noble, sacrificial lives on earth. Nor does He fail them in the hour of death. In that mysterious experience they are sustained by the glorious promise of immortal life through their Saviour, the Lord of Life and Death.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE BOSS OF BIG TREE CAMP.

HANK McDONALD, the boss of the camp at Big Tree bay, was "hard-boiled" even for a logger. He could swear in the most lurid style with such variety and expert care for fine details as to leave nothing to be desired. He was a hard worker and had muscles of steel, would just as soon fight as eat, and was afraid of nothing on God's earth. He had a perfect knowledge of logging, and could handle a crew so as to keep them contented and loyal. That, of course, meant a busy skid-road, a regular supply of rafts to be towed to town, and, consequently, pleased messages from the Company head-office. He could do everything that was to be done in a camp, and do it well, from splinting a broken leg to topping off a spar-tree two hundred feet in the air. He could file a saw, cook a meal, or run a gas engine. Indeed under his rough exterior you sensed a man of great ability with a heart of gold.

Before I had ever been into Big Tree I had heard of him at various camps up and down the coast. He was evidently held in high regard by the loggers. The special reason for speaking of him to me was to warn

time, somewhere, he had met a preacher who had given him an unfavorable impression of all ministers, and my friends didn't want me to run into any unpleasantness. This was the second year of my work on the *Sky Pilot* mission and I had won a good many friends up-coast who were solicitous for my welfare.

I passed by Big Tree bay several times heading for camps farther on, and, as I saw the steam of the donkey-engines on the mountain-side and noted the row of bunkhouses down by the shore, I knew that some day I must needs plan to go in there and meet this good fellow who had no use for preachers.

One week during the next spring, I was free from other duties and set out to visit the proscribed camp. We got in rather late in the evening and anchored out near the little float but not tied to it. Three or four gas boats already there took up all available space. It seemed too late to go ashore that night so I decided to leave the encounter over until the morning. A logger in a small boat, who had been out a short distance trying for a fish, rowed in to the float and got out. I spoke to him and asked him if he was going up to camp. He replied that he was, that he worked there. I then asked him to tell McDonald, the boss, that a mission-boat was in, and that, if agreeable, I would give the men a sermon to-morrow evening. "Like hell I will!" the man replied. "Do you think I

want to commit suicide? Hank will eat me alive or burn me up if I tell him there's a preacher coming into camp. Nothing doing with me! Make your will and then tell him yourself. But if you're wise you'll go while the going's good!" This certainly made the prospect for next day look anything but hopeful.

In the morning my engineer and I were eating our breakfast when we heard a "Hello!" I went out and was accosted by a man standing on the float. I guessed rightly it was the boss. He didn't leave me long in doubt as to his ideas. He asked me what I wanted there. I told him I was a missionary and would like his permission to have a meeting with the men. He answered me very forcibly that "no gospel-shark was going to hold forth in his camp until hell froze over." Told me to "pull up my hook and clear out or he'd come out and spank me." "Well," I said, "you're the foreman of this camp and, of course, what you say goes in Big Tree bay, and so, if you don't know how to give a fellow a square deal, I'll go on to some other camp where the boss is a 'white man' and will, at least, give me a fair show!" I kept my temper, but I wasn't going to take it lying down altogether even if I was a preacher. I knew he would have more respect for me if I met him on his own ground. While we were exchanging these few courtesies I noticed an old logger come quickly along the boom by which the float was connected with the shore.

He spoke to Macdonald and then called out to me "What's your name?" I told him. Then he and the foreman had a little rapid fire conversation with frequent looks in my direction. And then the old man called out, "Mr. Pringle, the boss says he wants you to come ashore. Don't bother lowering your dinghy. I'll row out in this one handy here." I was only a few boat-lengths over and he was soon alongside. He came on the *Sky Pilot* and said, "Mr. Pringle, you don't know me but I'll never forget you. Do you remember the Klondike and a man named Brodeur whom you brought two hundred miles in your dog-sleigh from Duncan Creek to Dawson when he had cut his foot? Well, I'm Brodeur! I heard you were on a mission-boat on the coast. I saw this boat anchored out here and figured that you might be on it. The boss got down ahead of me and I heard him giving you some of his syrup. I've got him cooled off though. Told him you were a special friend of mine and that if he didn't treat you right I'd burn the camp down or start a strike! I've got him fixed all right. You come right along. I know all these guys and when I tell them my story they'll welcome you like a raise in pay." Of course I remembered Brodeur, and the Duncan trip, and his wolf-dog Shep. Indeed it was the *dog* that was the most distinct memory of that journey. Shep was the noblest dog, (I was going to say "person" and not far wrong if I had), that I have

ever known, north or south. It was an interesting time we had that winter month in the Yukon, but I mustn't try to tell it here, for it is, as Kipling would say, "another story."

When we got on the float Brodeur introduced me to Macdonald and he gave me his hand, with the words, "The old man tells me you're a damn good scout, saved his life long ago. So I guess you can spout your stuff to the guys if you want to. I am sorry I spoke rough to you but I met a preacher once that turned me dead against you all."

Well, I finished my breakfast, or rather, I should say, ate another one, in the cookhouse, with my old tillicum sitting beside me recalling experiences and friends of former happy days in the North. Brodeur had seemed to me an old man even then. Now he was over seventy and still able to do light-work around the camp. He was the "bull-cook," the man who supplies the cook and bunk-houses with wood. He told me they all called him "Peasoup" because he was a French-Canadian.

By this time the men were back in the woods at work. I went out among them and spent the morning there and had dinner with the gang. My Klondike friend wasted no time in systematically introducing me and singing my praises. When the crew went back to work after dinner the boss asked me to come in to his shack and have a chat.

We sat down and after a little light talk back and forth, feeling our way and getting in touch, I told him that I had a very special liking for his last name, and proceeded to tell how my father, George Pringle, now dead, had served for about twenty years in the British Army under the name of "George McDonald," and that he had left me his medal edged with the words "559 Corporal G. McDonald, R.C.R." Of course there's a story connected with that queer fact. I told it in full to the foreman that afternoon. Some other time I may write it down for you.

Then he told me how it came that he had developed a positive aversion to all representatives of the cloth. His father and mother had left Scotland shortly after marriage and had located on a prairie homestead in Manitoba. They had a hard struggle against cold winters, hot summers, poor crops, difficulties of marketing, and, worst of all enemies, the almost unbearable isolation. Two children were born, himself, and a boy baby who died in infancy. When he was ten his mother died. One day when he had grown to be a young man his father complained of being sick and took to bed. Within a week he had become so much worse that the son decided they must have a doctor. The nearest was fifteen miles away. There were no autos in those days, and he didn't dare leave his father that long alone. There was a little village close at hand where he might get help. A young minister, named Brown,

had quarters there. He had met him and heard him preach. He seemed a good sort and had a horse which he used in reaching the half-dozen country schoolhouses where he held services. Perhaps he would go for the doctor. McDonald went over early to see him and found the young man sympathetic and ready to help. They saddled his horse and Brown set off. It was early spring. The roads were deep with mud and, in many places, were dangerously flooded with the overflow from the creeks. Henry McDonald went back home and found his father had grown rapidly worse. He looked for the doctor in vain and after two days his father died. He enquired for the minister and met a man who said he wasn't sure but thought he had seen him over at another settlement driving around with a young lady. Further questions seemed to make it probable that, for some unknown reason, Brown had failed in his errand of mercy, perhaps had run into some bad bit of road which he would give as his excuse for going off to this other place to enjoy himself. Young McDonald felt that the missionary should at least have come back to tell him that he couldn't get through. It all seemed so unexpectedly heartless that the grief-stricken lad grew bitter and angry. One of the neighbors, a Christian man who had often helped in this way when there was no minister around, read the burial service over his father. Brown seemed to have disappeared. It

was presumed he was away in some distant part of his field. It all seemed impossible of any other explanation than that he had been grossly unkind and selfish. You can hardly blame the orphaned lad for the hatred of ministers that this experience developed.

Within a week after the burial he sold the farm outright to a cash buyer and left for British Columbia. There he drifted into the camps and got into the logging game. He had never returned to Manitoba. His memories of the place were mostly sad and bitter, and he had never been able to bring himself to think kindly of preachers since that time.

It's queer how things turn out! While I had been listening to his story my mind had been trying to connect up some odds and ends of stray recollections that his narrative had awakened in my memory. The name "Brown" had started me puzzling. I had known a fellow named Brown, somewhere, that went west to preach. When McDonald finished my memory was still clouded. I asked him if he could tell me anything more about the missionary. "No, not very much," he said. "He was a young fellow, unmarried, was credited with being a fine scholar, and had come from Toronto University." When he said those last two words the whole thing came clearly to me like a flash. McDonald had been probably all wrong. Brown was in the graduating class of 1895 in Toronto when I was a freshman. He was one of the finest and most

brilliant men the University ever graduated. He went out west as a home missionary to some part of Manitoba and was drowned in the spring freshet while trying to bring aid to a sick man! I know it's almost too strange to believe but it's true. He was the man against whom McDonald had held this unjust grudge. I was able to convince McDonald that afternoon that I was right, but to make doubly certain, I wrote, after I got back to Vananda, to Toronto University and Manitoba. I got details which established, beyond the shadow of a doubt, that this was my college friend who had set out to get the doctor for McDonald's father. He had been drowned trying to ford a stream in flood. Nothing was thought of his absence for a fortnight. Then his friends became anxious. Search was made. His body and that of his horse were found. A month after, when I had the evidence complete, I made a special trip to Big Tree bay and there showed it to the foreman. I do not think there could have been a happier man than McDonald that day when he read for himself the letters by which the whole thing was absolutely cleared up. He confided in me that he had always been ashamed, down in his heart, of his unfriendly and unreasonable attitude towards the church, but the memory of the dastardly trick played on him, as he thought, kept his hatred alive. Now it was all straightened out and he was delighted. His father and mother had been professing Christians. He had

been brought up in the faith, and had never had a hard thought against the church until Brown's action, so absolutely misunderstood, had embittered him.

But let me get back to the camp and tell you an incident which will show you the real McDonald. That afternoon we went out into the woods together. I noticed a clump of fine big trees that had been left standing by themselves. It didn't look to me like "good logging" to cut all around without taking those trees out while you had your men and tools handy. I spoke about it. "Come over," McDonald said, "and I'll show you why we left them." As we drew near the tree he said, "Yes, they're back again!" He drew down a branch carefully to the level of our eyes and there, woven into the twigs, was a humming-bird's nest. The little lady was on the eggs. The cock-bird was darting excitedly about our heads. 'The high-rigger and I," said McDonald, "were out here a year ago this spring looking for a good spar tree to put the block on. This tree was strong enough and central. He started to climb when we noticed two birds fluttering about. Then we found their nest partly built. So we decided to leave the newly-weds to finish their house-keeping arrangements. We went over there to that tree we're using now and pulled them out that other way. It doesn't give us as good a show, and means a few dollars loss to the firm in these uncut trees, but I guess there would have been a riot in camp if we had disturbed

this lady and gentleman on their honeymoon!" McDonald changed his logging plans, involving several days' delay, the choice of an inferior location, as well as the loss of a few good logs, not because he feared a "riot" in camp, but because of his own kindly, gentle nature, hidden under an uncouth manner.

That evening I had the whole crew of sixty men in the cookhouse after supper to hear me speak. Brodeur and the boss had turned the trick. The psychology of it is evident to anyone who understands anything about human nature. The old bull-cook was a great favorite and any man he "boosted" must be all right. Then a preacher that could win over "hard-boiled" Hank McDonald in a few hours must be worth while seeing and hearing.

I slept in camp that night. The three of us sat together in the foreman's room reminiscencing until long after everyone else was in bed. In the morning after breakfast, as I was leaving, McDonald told me how glad he was that I had blown in. It had done him a world of good to know that after all Brown had not been a rotter. He said, "I feel, Mr. Pringle, like going penance for all these years I have blacklisted a man who was really a hero." "Well now, Macdonald," I replied, "if you really mean that I would suggest, if you don't mind me saying it, that your penance take the form of cutting out the rough language. Go

at it gradually so as not to get the stuttering habit!" He said, laughingly, that he'd have a try.

For the rest of the years I spent on the mission, Big Tree camp was a home to me, McDonald a brother, and Brodeur a father!

CHAPTER XIX.

THREE WEDDINGS.

EVERYBODY is, or ought to be, interested in weddings. During my thirty years of ministry, mostly on the frontier, I have had some odd experiences in tying the nuptial knot. Many of these are worth telling but in this chapter I limit myself to three.

While missionary to the loggers I had comparatively few weddings. Girls were very scarce about the camps and marriages were mostly held in the distant city of Vancouver with one of the local ministers officiating. Now and again, however, the affair was held up-coast and on such occasions I took charge.

A young lady, whom we shall call Miss Burton, was visiting her aunt, a married woman resident at the beach at Stillwater, where her husband was in charge of the boom for the Brooks, Scanlon, O'Brien Company. One of the camp "high-riggers," whom we'll call Bruce, met her and a mutual liking developed into a love affair.

Eventually Bruce sought me out and with the usual awkward manner and stammering tongue told me the news, which had been plain to everybody for several weeks, that he and Miss Burton were in love, wished

to be married, and would like me to "do the job." The day was appointed. The couple confided in me that they didn't want to be married in the camp because they wouldn't know where to draw the line in the invitations, and they feared there would be all kinds of pranks played on them, harmless but embarrassing. They asked me if there was any way out of their difficulty. I suggested the *Sky Pilot,* my mission-boat, as a possible place for the ceremony. They fell in with my idea and so it was arranged.

At the appointed time, on the afternoon of a lovely summer day, I picked up the party of four from the Stillwater float and, to the sound of cheering voices and joyful noises of various kinds ashore, headed out with them up Malaspina Strait. We travelled on for an hour or two until we were near the Blubber Bay Light. There in quiet water, with the sun pouring down on us, we lay to, stopped our engine, and got ready to proceed with the wedding. There was no wind blowing and the water was quiet. However there is almost always a little "move" in the sea on the calmest day, but I anticipated no trouble to anyone from the slight sway of the boat. We stood up in proper order in our little cabin. We had to stand very close together, it was a hot day, and our heads were very near the ceiling upon the outside of which the sun was beating down. I felt it warm and close but not at all bothersome. The boat swung slowly and gently back and forth.

As I went on with the ceremony I naturally looked frequently at the bride and groom and, when about half through, it suddenly struck me that they were looking unusually pale and the pallor was increasing. Unused to the sea the almost imperceptible rocking of the boat was affecting them. I figured all would be well, however, until I had finished my brief ceremony decently and in order. Unfortunately just about that time some coasting steamboat had passed down the strait near us and her wash came over, rolling us quite heavily back and forth. When the swells struck us I had not yet asked the girl to make the formal promise but when I looked at her and was about to say the usual words, I saw the game was nearly up. It was a close race between me and sea-sickness! The poor lass was pale as death and gulping and swallowing. I knew I hadn't a moment to lose. I simply said, "I pronounce you husband and wife. Amen!" Immediately the whole party, bride, groom, bridesmaid, and groomsman madly scrambled up the hatchway stairs and put their heads over the rail, regardless of the dignity of the occasion. I wasted no time in getting them across the strait to Powell River where, after a day's rest in the hotel, they would take the steamboat for Vancouver and their honeymoon, none the less truly and happily married although the ceremony had had such an undignified, unique, and laughable ending.

. . . .

There was another wedding held on the *Sky Pilot* at Trail Bay that had some peculiar features in it. The girl was the only daughter of a stump-rancher who, with his wife, lived three miles back from shore trying to make a living on an impossible homestead. The girl was so young that the law required her to have the consent of her parents before a licence would be granted. She was getting a decent young fellow from Vancouver who had happened to meet her while on a holiday trip along the coast. I approved of the wedding because of the drab hopelessness of her home. It seemed to offer a way of escape.

I went back to her home to get her and had dinner at their shack. Then we started down through the woods to the beach. The bride wore no stockings and had plenty of mosquito bites, old and new, on her legs. An old sweater and torn skirt completed her attire. Her hair was all done up in curl-papers! She carried her trousseau in a small, white sugar sack over her shoulder. Her conversation centred mostly around a shocking murder that had been committed a few days before in that district. At a certain point in the trail she took me a yard or two into the brush and showed me where they had found the body, gave me full and gruesome details as to its appearance and position. It was, of course, by far the most interesting event in all her monotonous life in the backwoods and, naturally, she had missed nothing of interest.

A Mrs. Carter, of one of the families at the beach, had invited her to come to her home and dress. I left her there. My engineer and I decorated the boat a little and tied it securely so there would be no danger of any more hurried exits such as there was in the Bruce wedding. When the wedding party came aboard the boat you would hardly have recognized the bride as the poorly-clad girl who had come down the trail with me an hour or two before. She had on white stockings and shoes, and a plain but dainty white dress. Her hair was prettily curled and she carried a lovely little bouquet of flowers. She looked very sweet. Mrs. Carter was matron of honor, and my engineer supported the groom who had come up a day or two before from the city on the coast steamboat. He intended taking his bride to the city that evening on the boat's return trip.

Everything went through in regular order except that when I asked the bride if she would take the man to be her wedded husband she said, "I love him, Mr. Pringle, and I'll marry him if you think it is all right?" I answered in the affirmative and then the knot was tied.

. . . .

This third story is about a wedding I had in the Mississippi valley in Minnesota long ago.

I had a circuit of three schoolhouses in a farming district in those days. At one of these points I had a

small but efficient choir. One young lady was a very pleasing soloist and once in a while I would have her come with me to the other points and help with the song service there. I shall call her Katherine McLean. Her first name was really Katherine, but McLean was not her surname. It was a name like that, fine-sounding, and with a good tradition back of it. This is a wedding story and so of course you've guessed rightly that she fell in love with a young man whom she met on one of these trips. Their love was mutual and in due course I was asked to unite them in the bonds of matrimony. The man was a fine young chap, a prosperous farmer. Indeed, everything was ideal except for one thing and that was his name. Shakespeare says "a rose by any other name would smell as sweet," but if he means to say that all names are of equal value he is undoubtedly wrong. This wedding proves my contention. The man's name was Catt! That extra "t" doesn't take the "scratch" or "meow" out of the word's associations and connotations. And to add to its felinity his first name was Thomas! The only thing that relieved the situation was that the man had no moustache. I ask you honestly how much better it would have been if he had embraced the opportunity of taking her name as his, and I then would have been able to get rid of the Catt by uniting them under the name of Mr. and Mrs. Thomas McLean.

Well, I had to go through with it and ask Thomas

Catt if he would take Katherine McLean to be his wedded wife and ask her if she would take this Thomas Catt for her husband. They both agreed thereto and the base deed was done. I congratulated Catt and gave my best wishes to Mrs. Tom Catt, although that last title somehow seemed an anomaly. Some months after the marriage the community in which she lived gave a concert. I was asked to come and act as chairman. I announced the items on the programme and sometimes added a word of introduction. But when I came to a vocal solo to be given by our friend, whose maiden name was McLean, I could hardly trust my voice to do more than state the fact that "the next piece on the programme is a solo entitled *Oft In The Stilly Night* by Mrs. Tom Catt." It struck me as so ludicrously reminiscent of midnight rehearsals on the back fence that I could hardly control my voice and face. She sang beautifully and was recalled and gave a selection that had no catch in it. It helped me to get my balance again.

Years have gone by. Friends have written me stating that the Catts have now two little ones, a boy and a girl. The boy was named after his father and the girl after her mother. At school they are called Tommy and Kitty respectively and so we have Tom Catt, Mrs. Tom Catt, Tommy Catt, and Kitty Catt! Of course there are no mice in the house!

CHAPTER XX.

IT'S A STRANGE OLD WORLD.

THIS trip I had been at Lund, Savary Island, Refuge Cove, and Deceit Bay, on successive days, speaking to the men. We were late getting away from Deceit Bay and had no time to spare if we were to make Orford Bay in time to have a meeting in Bernard's camp there.

The *Sky Pilot* was hitting a good pace, however, and if nothing unforeseen happened to delay us, we would make it in time to gather the fellows in after supper and tell them some "bed-time stories."

We had passed through Calm Channel with Cliff Rock on our left, where years ago Capt. Vancouver had anchored for shelter, and were well along in Lewis Strait, near the mouth of Bute Inlet, when I saw what looked like a small gas-boat about two miles away on our port bow. Treloar, my engineer, put the glasses on it and reported that it was indeed what we thought. Also, he said, it seemed in trouble for there was no exhaust showing. A heavy swell was coming in from the east and, besides, there was a narrow perilous channel among the mountainous islands over that way, called the "Hole-in-the-Wall," into which it

might be drawn. That would mean a wrecked boat and possible loss of life. The boat wasn't, however, in any immediate danger and we kept on our course. We had no time to spare if I was going to get into camp to speak to those hundred loggers before they went to their bunks. We kept on for half an hour. Every little while we would look through our field-glasses hoping to see smoke from the exhaust. My conscience commenced to bother me. I recalled a story about a man going down from Jerusalem to Jericho who fell among thieves. Next morning a preacher and an elder came by, but they were both in a hurry to go along to church where a congregation of perhaps five hundred people might be waiting for them, and so they passed by the poor fellow without helping him. I had often preached to others on that parable, and now the parable was preaching to me! I thought about the hundred loggers, subtracted the man on the disabled gas-boat from them and got the usual answer of ninety-nine. According to school mathematics that made ninety-nine more reasons why I should go on rather than turn out for just one man. Besides he would probably soon have his engine in shape and would start her up without any help. But there is a Higher Mathematics that, with the Jericho-Jerusalem story as an example, claims that one man in real trouble, whom you can help, counts more than ten thousand people who have no urgent need of you. Anyway I was getting a

"kink" in my neck from looking out of the side-door of the pilot-house, and that, combined with the other mix-up that I was having with my conscience, forced me to put the wheel over and we headed straight across. When we ran alongside, and went aboard, we soon found that the trouble was simply that he had got down to the bottom of his gas-tank and that the "gasoline" was mostly dirt and water, as it usually is at the bottom of a reservoir. We soon fixed him up with a few gallons of clean stuff, waited until the engine was going merrily, clutch in and screw turning, and then we swung away for Bute with his hearty words of thanks sounding in our ears. When we reached him he was drifting swiftly towards the Hole-in-the-Wall. He surely needed us and said so. One expression he used was, "Good God, but I was glad you came!" Someway I couldn't help but think there was more truth in his oath than he dreamed of. It was most certainly the Jesus-story of the Good Samaritan that had sent me over to help him. Then doesn't someone say, and isn't it true, that "Christ has no hands but our hands, no feet but our feet," and, I suppose, no gas-boats but ours, to do his errands? Anyway, Treloar and I were a whole lot happier as we turned away because we had given the fellow the aid he wanted. He would have plenty of gas to make Bruce's Landing before dark. I didn't think to ask the man his name.

We reached Orford Bay late in the afternoon, had

early supper, and I set out on the eleven miles up the trail to the woods camp. Of course I was too late for my purposed meeting. Almost everyone had turned in. The time-keeper found me a bunk. One or two of the men near me were still awake and, in subdued tones, so as not to awaken the others who were asleep, I told them about being kept late by going out of our course to assist the other boat. A man further along, who was apparently asleep but had been listening, stuck his head up and asked me the size and name of the gas-boat. I told him that it was under thirty feet and its name was *Sybil.* He sat up then and asked if she had a green house and gray hull, and was the man small, thin, and sickly looking with a couple of fingers off. He had described the man and boat exactly and I told him so. "Well, say," he said, "I want to thank you. That was my brother. He's kind of sickly, was gassed overseas, lost his fingers there, and I bought him the gas-boat. It isn't too good but it was the best I could do. He's going to try the fishing game, thought it might give him good health, and he might be able to make enough to feed the missus and kids. He's not an expert with a gas engine. I surely appreciate your helping him!" He was very grateful and went on asking further questions. As the conversation proceeded I could see uneasy squirming under the blankets here and there, and the tired men muttering words that were not prayers. So we stopped our talk.

I stayed over the next day and had my meeting in the cook-house early in the evening. There was a good crowd and among them, you can be sure, was the man whose brother we had helped. After the service an Englishman, named Gillingham, gave me a letter to post for him. I put it in my pocket without looking at the address. The foreman, McCoy, urged me to stay all night. I refused his invitation because I wanted to sleep on my boat, for we would have to pull out about six in the morning in order to catch the slack in the Yuculta tidal-rapids and get through to Shoal Bay. The tide "waits for no man" and the wild Yucultas are all but impossible to navigate when they are running strong.

About half past eight I started off down towards the beach. It was an easy grade, all down hill, and I had an electric flash-light. I trudged steadily along through the darkness. Great trees were round about me and dense brush lined the trail on both sides. The only sound, apart from the distant roar of a tumbling mountain stream, was that of my own footfall. I had gone on about three miles when I became acutely conscious of a new sound. I stopped and listened. There was nothing. I decided I was mistaken and went on. But my nerves were tense and my ears alert, and I discovered that as I walked along there was a slight crackling noise in the brush on my left. I turned my flashlight on the place from which the sound came and

there I saw the outline of the head and the gleaming eyes of a cougar! These big cats are sometimes six feet long from tip to tip, and whileI had never known them attack a person unless extremely hungry or cornered, yet I didn't fancy one of them as an uninvited travelling companion! I set off again and the beast kept slipping along through the brush not ten feet from me at any time. He was just curious, I suppose, but if I had had a rifle this would have been one instance of "curiosity killing a cat." No, I didn't run, but every hundred yards or so I would find myself out of breath I had been walking so fast. I'd stop and turn my flash into the brush and usually could see some part of him. For two unpleasant miles he accompanied me. I found myself always listening for the noise of him as I stepped along until I think my left ear got sticking out a little farther from my head than normal and has stayed that way!

After years, it seemed to me, of this creepy business of being shadowed by the animal, I came to a deep gully with precipitous sides. Over this two trees had been felled and hewed flat so as to make a good footbridge. Crossing this I turned my light back several times but saw no sign of the cougar. He wouldn't leave the brush and come out into the open on the bridge, and so, I am thankful to say, I "shook" him. I had made record time for three miles and it was only about half past eleven when I climbed aboard and down through

the hatch. I found Treloar awake, expecting me, and with a nice little snack ready for us to eat before going to bed.

Next day we easily made Shoal Bay on a favoring tide. The coasting steamboat, carrying mail, was expected in that day and I posted Gillingham's letter with the purser. But before doing so I had happened to look at the address. It was an unusual one. It read, "Miss Victorienne Letourneau, Auchel, Pas-de-Calais, France."

"Auchel" was very familiar to me. My battalion, the Cameron Highlanders, used to go back there for "rest." It was a sort of heaven-on-earth to us after the trenches. I had been there a dozen times, knew the streets, stores, and quite a number of the people in the little town. Indeed could it be possible that Letourneau was the name of the family I was billeted with one time? They had a daughter who had been away when I was there and I had never met her. But my memory was indistinct and uncertain and I could hardly believe that such a strange coincidence could occur as this seemed to be.

Some days after I got back to my home-port, Vananda, and I lost no unnecessary time in looking up my old letters written to my wife from France. They had been carefully filed away and I easily found the one I wanted. Here's an extract from it:—"We are back in 'rest' again at our usual town, the place my

man McPherson says is the 'Camerons' heaven.' It is a place of comfortable dwelling-houses with spacious, well-kept gardens in which are apple and plum trees, and grass plots. Our battalion has a high place in the regard of these people for our men have all acted decently with them. I have a first-class billet with a family named Letourneau. The man is away with the French troops. Madame and her old father and mother are here. There is a young daughter I have not seen who is visiting for a week or two in a neighboring town. Her name is Victorienne. Pretty name, isn't it? She is a fine-looking girl if the picture they showed me tells the truth. There are also dear little twin girls about six years of age, one called Alsace, and the other Lorraine. The names were given by their parents as a patriotic protest against Germany's forcible alienation, after the Franco-Prussian war, of these two provinces which France claimed as hers.

"When I came to the house the first morning they were all busy taking the wool out of a home-made mattress, pulling it apart and putting it back in so that it would make a softer bed for 'Monsieur le Capitaine.' So these nights I have slept in the cleanest room and on the softest bed one could want, the first time in a real bed in three months! I am awakened in the morning by a rooster crowing under my window, and with the other pleasant sounds of the farmyard around me, it makes the war seem far away. Young Mrs. Le-

tourneau was a lady's maid in England for a number of years and speaks English fluently. It is a relief to meet an inhabitant who can talk good English, instead of me being forced to struggle with my imperfect French vocabulary in carrying on a conversation. They are lovely people, kind, sociable, and bright. From a word or two they have let drop I gather that Victorienne has an 'affair' with some British soldier. These things are naturally quite common and do not amount to much as a rule.

"On Sunday afternoon I attended service, with the Letourneaus, in little Protestant church here. I couldn't understand the preacher for he spoke too quickly. It is a plain little building seating perhaps one hundred and fifty people. They have no musical instrument but everybody sang heartily. Over the door outside are the words *L'Église Evangelique.* I was greatly interested to see this little Protestant group in an almost solid Roman Catholic community."

The letter goes on to tell of other matters; but that is enough to convince you of the truth of the remarkable thing that had happened. A letter had been given me to post by a man I had chanced to meet in a logging camp, in one of the loneliest parts of this far-off lonely coast, and it was addressed to the daughter of the people I had been billeted with in France!

You will surely want to know the rest of the romance, for so it was. Later I took steps to get into

close touch with Gillingham and found him a worthy fellow in every sense. He had served in the war with an Imperial unit. He spoke French well and had been billeting officer for his battalion. This work had brought him into contact with the Letourneau family. He and Victorienne had taken a fancy to each other although she was then only in her early teens. An occasional visit with a year or so of correspondence and they had become engaged. His people were heavily interested in timber limits in British Columbia and they had sent him out to get at the inside of the actual work of logging, and to find capable men who might be trusted to open up operations on these limits if it was thought advisable. To do this most thoroughly he had decided to spend a few months working in various camps; and it seemed to me like a most sensible idea as well as showing he had lots of grit.

In one of his letters he told them in Auchel about meeting me, and, in return, a very kind message came back in which they greatly wondered at the strange happening. Two years later Gillingham returned to England, and, in due course, I received a cordial invitation to their wedding to be held in *L'Église Evangelique,* Auchel. I am sure it was a fine affair "and they lived happily ever after." It's a strange old world!

CHAPTER XXI.

TWO CAMEOS.

1. "CHARITY NEVER FAILETH."

MRS. FOURNIER lived on Cougar Island a few miles inland from Spruce Bay. She had two sons, young men at work in the logging camps. The younger son, Joe, was a harum-scarum sort. There was no real meanness in him but he caused his mother a good deal of worry by his irresponsible actions and careless, unconventional habits. He was a good workman and never needed to look for a job, and always, too, turned in a generous share of his wages to his mother.

As it befalls most young men so it befell him. A young lady came from Vancouver to teach the Spruce Bay school. She was very attractive and soon had many admirers. Among them was Joe Fournier. As the months went by it was evident that there were only two who were seriously considered in the running for the young woman's hand. One was our friend Fournier and the other a man named Howard who was teaching a school on the island eight miles back in the woods. They were both good fellows and while their rivalry was intense there was no ill-will,

although, of course, each wished the other were out of the way. The contest was greatly enjoyed by the little communities on the island and the young fellows had to endure a lot of "ragging." By a queer and startling turn of fate the contest was ended dramatically and tragically one afternoon in May. It was Saturday and Howard had come down to Spruce Bay as usual. Fournier was handicapped that afternoon by having to work, while his rival was on holiday. He was one of the boom-men working on the floating logs, sorting them out, and making them up into booms ready to be towed down-coast the long distance to Vancouver. The logs were being sent down a water-chute from the mountain-side where they were being felled. These forest giants would come down at tremendous speed, shoot out from the end of the flume and plunge into the deep water, emerging almost immediately to float, with hundreds of others, inside a standing-boom until their turn had come to be put into the big raft.

Howard had gone to the far side of the bay for a swim. He was well out when a cramp seized him and he shouted for help. Fournier was the only one to hear his cry. The rest of the crew were far back in the bay. Tearing off his boots and coat he sprang in and swam to the drowning man, and helped him up on to a log floating near. Then he started to swim for shore to get a small boat tied there and bring

Howard in. Unwittingly Howard had got into the dangerous area in front of the log-chute where any time one of these great trees might come tearing down to the water. And it unfortunately happened that while Fournier was on his way a log was sent down and struck the brave fellow and killed him. Howard's cries soon brought help. He and Fournier were taken ashore. It was all shockingly sad. The young lady was almost overwhelmed with grief. I think she realized that she had lost the man who had really won her heart. She couldn't finish her term in school. After the burial she resigned and a substitute took her place.

Years ago, in more prosperous days, a pretty little Methodist church had been built at Spruce Bay. It was still standing and had been kept in good repair although the community now consisted of only about a hundred souls.

So it was planned, of course, that the funeral should be held from the church. The coffin was placed on the communion table, floral tributes heaped over and around it. Mrs. Fournier took it for granted that I would conduct the funeral. Although they were devout Roman Catholics they had never failed to come to the occasional meetings I had held in the community church. I felt, however, that there would be greater comfort for her in this service if a priest of her own church could be brought to officiate. I spoke to her

about it. She assured me that my services would be fully acceptable, that, in spite of church differences, we were both trying to follow Christ and we were all friends. It showed a charitable, kindly heart, but I told her I would try to get a priest from the mainland across the strait, and if I failed in that attempt then I would take charge.

I crossed forthwith on the *Sky Pilot* and fortunately found my priest at home, a very fine old gentleman who gave me cordial welcome. I arranged to have the funeral on a day on which he would be free from local duties. At the appointed time we brought him over. When we got off at the Spruce Bay float we could see the people already gathering in front of the church. The priest noticed it and asked me if the body were in the church. I had forgotten to mention that fact, so important in view of differing church forms. It presented a very real difficulty to the old priest. It would seem ecclesiastically impossible for a Catholic priest to conduct a funeral in an edifice dedicated to the proclamation of heretical doctrines. He asked if we might take the body to a private house. I told him that if we did it would develop a bad feeling of bitterness and resentment among the people and we must try to find some other way. It was an unusual and teasing problem. But when two Christian men earnestly face the duty of easing the burden of grief-stricken hearts, in the presence of death, they can

always find a way around credal obstacles. So did we. I told the good father to go into the church alone, and there, by himself, he could repeat the necessary formula, with sprinkling of holy water and other rites, that his priestly vows required of him in order to purge the building of its Protestant taint and change it into a Catholic church. No one but ourselves would then be any the wiser, we could hold the funeral and no feelings would be hurt nor hateful passions aroused. I would have service in it, I said, the next Sunday, making it into a Protestant church again and removing the curse he had presumably put upon it! The good old Christian laughed heartily over my proposal and said it would be just the thing. So it was done. The church was filled. Everyone was there to show their sympathy with the bereaved and to do honor to the brave boy who had given his life for another. I was the priest's bell-ringer, usher, and altar-boy, helping him on and off with his gowns and filling his censor for him. After he had finished his ritual in Latin he preached us one of the most touching and comforting funeral sermons I have ever listened to. The burial ended, the Protestant mission-boat took him home again. Next Sunday I held my simple service with much the same congregation present, among them the Fourniers. Nor did the building, the people, the priest or the minister seem any the worse because violence had been done to the barriers of sect and creed.

TWO CAMEOS

So many gods, so many creeds,
 So many ways that wind and wind,
While all this old world needs
 Is just the art of being kind!

2. HIS LITTLE GIRL.

When first I heard of Finn Bay I thought that probably it had been given that name because of some big catch of salmon in its waters. I was mistaken in my guess. Some ten years ago a dozen families of Russian Finns had left their homeland to face the adventure of settling in the far west of Canada. By some strange turn of fate they had drifted to the west coast and had ultimately taken up bush homesteads in this rough land by the shores of the Pacific. They turned to logging, fishing, and farming, all in small and primitive ways. The sheltered cove in which they kept their boats soon became known as Finn Bay. I had gone among them several times to get acquainted and see if I could be of any help. I found them difficult of approach. At the outset there was the language barrier. I couldn't talk Finnish and they were slow to pick up English. After a while we established more or less friendly relations through some little services I was able to render them. My conventional offices as minister made no appeal to them. To some of them, who were atheistic, my profession was definitely objectionable and they told me so in no uncer-

tain way. One of these latter was John Troski who had tried hand-logging and was making a decent living at it for himself, his wife, and their three little children. They lived in a shack in the tall timber at the foot of the mountains two miles from the shore. He had cleared away the jungle from about an acre of ground, put up his home, a little three-room frame structure, and then started at his logging down by the sea. He would be away all day. The family had no neighbors within a mile. The babies had been born there without a doctor with only a neighbor woman as nurse. The eldest was a boy of nine, the next was a girl of seven named Alma. These two had been attending the little one-roomed backwoods school and could talk common English nicely. They and I got on good terms with one another. Some story-papers and a toy or two made us good friends. You see I had a girl of my own at home of the same age as Alma so I knew the technique of winning her favor. Through her I won sufferance from her father. But it was evident that he had a deep-rooted aversion to anything or anyone connected with religion. He had stories to tell of his own land in which the church bore an unworthy part, and if they were half true, I could sympathize with him in his hostile attitude towards that institution.

Of course I never attempted to read the Bible, or pray, or sing a hymn in his house, even when he was

absent, tact and common courtesy forbade it. He must be assured of my friendship first and then the way might open some day as the years went by for me to bring him into touch with those finer things of life which Christ has to offer.

While lying at anchor one summer evening in Finn Bay I saw, from the stern of the *Sky Pilot,* a row-boat coming in our direction. The man in it I recognized as my big broad-shouldered friend, John Troski. When he came alongside he climbed out, tied up his dinghy to our rail, and went down into the cabin with me. I knew there was trouble for he had hardly said a word and his countenance was clouded with grief. He sat on the berth opposite me, looked at me and tried to speak. He could only say, "Alma is dead," and then he broke. His big frame shook with sobs and the tears streamed down his face. I cried a little bit too. Couldn't help it for I knew how dear my own little girl was to me. After a while the story was told of how the mother had missed the girl in the house, had gone all around the yard searching and into the woods frantically calling her name. An hour passed and they thought of the well. There they found her dead. She had moved the board to look in to see her face reflected in the water. Leaning over too far she had lost her balance and gone down. In falling she had struck her head on the stone cribbing, and being stunned, had been drowned without any outcry.

Troski had come home at his usual hour for supper. Alma always used to run down the trail to meet her daddy. He would toss her in the air with his strong arms and then she would ride home on his shoulder. There was no happy little fairy to greet him that night. When the sobbing woman told the story he could eat no supper but walked straight down the trail not knowing where he went. When he came to the beach he saw the mission boat and rowed out to unburden his heart to me.

I do not think I have words in which to write down our talk that evening. I wouldn't care to do it even if I could. It would seem to me sacrilege to print it for the careless world to read. We came to the place at last where I could tell him that I didn't think he had lost his little girl. I told him about the Good Shepherd who took the lambs in His arms, and carried them in His bosom. He listened to me. It was sweet music, light in the darkness, to his father-heart. It was the thing he really needed and he took it. He said at last, "Pringle, do you yourself believe that Jesus is right? Tell me straight. If you do I will too. I can't lose my Alma if there's a gambling chance to see her again." Of course I told him straight. His little child led him to Christ and his heart was comforted.

The funeral was held next day. We made a crude coffin in the shed and left it there. The little body was

dressed in her nightgown and laid upon the bed with a few wild flowers about her. She looked asleep. The shack was filled with sympathetic neighbors who had come from miles around. Of course the service was very simple. The father and mother sat at the child's head and feet. At the close the school teacher sang the sweet old hymn *Safe in the Arms of Jesus.* Then Troski placed the body in the coffin, I nailed the lid down, and he carried it out to the backyard and we put it in the grave which had been dug on a piece of higher ground under a tree. There we buried the body confident that the little lamb, Alma herself, was safe with the Good Shepherd. Troski had shaped a little board which he put at the head of the grave after I had printed on it, with a piece of black crayon, the child's name, age, and a verse of Christian hope.

Then with words of sympathy the friends left for their homes. My engineer, Price, and I were down near the gate when Troski called to us to wait. He came down the trail and held out a ten-dollar bill to me. That generous gift from a very poor man spoke of his love for his daughter. He wanted her funeral to be right in every way, and in Finland he knew it was customary to pay the pastor at burials. Of course I understood, but, all the same, I couldn't think of taking any money. It would offend too seriously my sense of the finer "fitness of things" for me to take anything at all on this occasion. So I refused it. He persisted.

I backed away and he kept coming on, until, to show him I was in earnest in my refusal, I turned and ran for a few yards. He smiled then and put the bill back in his pocket. I came back and we shook hands. If ever there was real gratitude in a man's eyes it was shining in Troski's.

Going down the trail Price took a little rise out of me. He said that if I ever told the story of this burial there would be one incident in it that people generally would find it hard to believe and that would be the last part, where a Scotch preacher ran away from a ten-dollar bill!

CHAPTER XXII.

DOG EAT DOG.

THE trail down Indian river was gone. The ice was holding in the main but there was a roaring stream two feet deep running over it, carrying off the snow-water that was now commencing to flood down from the southern slopes of the Klondike hills. This news I heard from a musher at the Jo-Jo roadhouse at the head of Gold Run creek. I was on my way to Eureka creek and would have to travel twenty miles down Gold Run and ten miles along the right limit of Indian, before I crossed it to go five miles up Eureka to the group of miners who were located there. I had some literature and mail for them, and a sermon "on my chest" that I wanted to unload on their devoted heads! This news of trail conditions decided me to leave my dogs at the roadhouse and travel light the rest of the journey. When I got within sight of Indian I found it was even worse than stated. The ice had commenced to break up here and there. Piling up in places it was turning part of the raging waters into the woods and making the whole narrow valley almost impassable.

For the first ten miles I had to keep close to the

foot of the mountain, sometimes having to climb up its cliffs to avoid the torrent below. A toilsome four hours brought me at last opposite the mouth of Eureka creek which I could see pouring into Indian from the other side.

Now I had to face the unpleasant and dangerous task of crossing the river. After sizing up the situation I made up my mind that I could probably wade over. The valley widened slightly there and the overflow was not so deep. The only question was whether the ice underneath was strong enough to hold me and had no breaks in it. This could not be known by any other way than by actual trial. I wrote in my note-book that I was going to attempt the crossing, giving hour and date. I tore out the page and stuck it up on a tree where the possible musher would see it if anything happened to me. It would, at least, let them know my fate if I disappeared under the ice in the tumultuous river.

Then I cut a strong pole about twelve feet long, rolled up my pants, and started in. I would feel ahead carefully with the pole to see if the ice were there under the water, and then, gripping the long stick in the middle with both hands, would venture forward. I went on at first without accident. The water was tearing down at terrific speed. When half-way across I found I had under-estimated its depth and it came surging up around my waist. I could barely keep my feet, and

if it had not been for my pole, against which at times I had to prop myself, I would have been swept away. The water was desperately cold but I felt I could stand it for the five hundred yards across. I moved cautiously and slowly through the roaring flood. Several heavy cakes of ice came down towards me at a mad speed. My trusty staff again saved my life in warding them off although one piece gave me a nasty flesh-cut as it swept by.

Within ten yards of the desired shore I had the closest call of all. I had sounded the ice ahead with the pole and was carefully advancing, taking for granted it would hold. It failed to do this and broke under me as I stepped forward. I went down, the whirling water closing over my head. My legs were caught by the powerful stream below and pinned against the lower side of the hole. I would have gone under the ice in a moment, and that would have ended things for me, had it not been for my pole. I kept firm hold on it, and I had need to for my grasp was almost torn loose. I could feel it bend, but it held me, and with what breath I had left, I made a supreme effort, pulled myself above water, and got my feet on firm ice. Trembling with the exertion I moved forward with extreme care, and, fortunately, got close enough to the bank to grasp the limb of a tree just as I felt the rotten shore ice giving under me again. I climbed through the tree to safety. That notice put

up on the opposite shore before I started was surely a wise precaution!

It was spring-time and the weather wasn't at all extreme, so I didn't stop to try to build a fire, just pulled off my parka, wrung the water out of it, put it on again, and hit the trail at a smart pace, trusting to the exertion to warm me up. Rough going on the up-grade soon took away the shivering, and by the time I had reached the North-West Mounted Police post, at the forks of the creek, I was feeling fine; wet and tired of course, but warm and hungry. My brother, Sergt. James Pringle, was in charge of the detachment, and he soon had me dressed in dry underclothes and in a police uniform. Very shortly after we sat down to a grand supper of roast young moose done to a turn. Oh yes, surely, there were potatoes, cranberry sauce, sourdough-bread and tea, and a nice pie made out of dried apples!

I stayed with my brother that night. I spent the next day going up and down the two branches of the creek, telling the men that there would be a meeting in the barracks that evening. I didn't have to invite them, because all they needed was to be told "when and where" and they would surely be there. So we had a good, old, happy meeting; the old Book, the old hymns, the old Message! You can't beat that combination for men who have been through real tribulation and are off in lonely places far from home.

DOG EAT DOG

A man named Ben Locke who lived alone on "8 above" (that is, claim Number 8, counted up-stream from the Discovery post), asked me to stay the night with him. I liked Locke, knew he had a spare bunk and a clean cabin, so I agreed to go. He lit the candles, put on a good fire, made everything cozy, and then, over a cup of tea, we commenced yarning in great style. I had just got hold of some verses written by a Dawson man which I rather fancied and I recited some portions of one of the poems to Locke. It ran thus:—

It's wolf eat wolf, when a wolf goes lame,
In the pack, on a bull-moose trail.
There's no thought then of the followed game,
The beasts close in with a savage aim,
She-wolf or leader, it's all the same,
It barely has time for a dying wail
Ere the beasts are rending its crippled frame.
It's a rule that will never fail.

It's dog eat dog when the huskies fight
In camp, when the grub runs low.
It isn't a question of which has right
To the last lean bit of a bone in sight,
But the brute will beat which is best to bite
And snap with savage blow.
With the dog that's down it is "off" that night,
Save for blood-marks in the snow.

And it's man eat man when a man goes broke,
Pretty much in the dog-wolf way.
When you knock around with a well-filled poke,

There's a slap on the back and a jolly joke.
When they find you cannot pay!
Let disasters come that you cannot cloak,
Let your luck turn bad and your wealth decay,
Your pals will change to different folk.

Of course the verses started us philosophizing on the value of true friendship and its rarity in the world. Then Locke said: "There is one phrase in that poem which has recalled to my mind the most agonizing experience I have ever had. The words 'dog eat dog' bring back a memory that I can never long forget. I know, Pringle, that I have a reputation on the creek for being a stay-at-home, that I never go on any long trips if I can avoid it, and when I do go won't travel alone. There's a reason for it. I've never told anyone this story before but I feel in the mood for it to-night. I think it will do me good to tell it to you if you care to listen." Of course I told him to go ahead and he did.

"If you wanted to give a title to this plain yarn of mine," he said, "you might call it 'Dog Eat Dog.' The reason for that will appear later. It's a story of a lone journey I took the first year I came north. I staked a claim on upper Bonanza that didn't pay to work and I was anxious to get in somewhere else. About that time I heard of a stampede being on to Lightning creek and I decided I would try my luck there. I made enquiries of a man who had been over

Clear Creek way, which, you know, lies about a hundred miles out towards Lightning. He was able to give me general directions as to how to travel after I left Clear. He had talked with a man who had been to Lightning although he had never been there himself. While his information might be taken as probably correct, yet it was second-hand, and, to my sorrow, I found out later that it was misleading.

"I was a chechako then. Had been in only about nine months. Came down the Yukon in a small boat in summer and so I knew very little about mushing on the snow-trails in the dead of winter. But lack of experience wasn't going to stop me. I bought a small tent and a team of three skinny malemutes, harnesses, and sleigh, got what grub I thought I'd need for myself and the dogs, lashed it all on, and started out. This was in December and the cold was fierce. Call it 60 below zero and you'd understate it. Nothing daunted I made an early start one morning, reached the Summit roadhouse on the Dominion divide, easily, that night; then the Arkansaw roadhouse the next night. After that I would have to camp out. As you can imagine I had my troubles and some narrow escapes from serious hurt. But I made Clear Creek safely, and started out on a short-cut, as I thought, to McQuesten River which I planned to follow up for fifty miles. I lost my bearings and, the worst of it was, I didn't realize it until, after passing over a

low divide and going miles further, I found myself in a district of bare, windswept plateaus and deep ravines. It was certainly not the Lightning Creek country.

"There were no trails, of course, except what my team and I made, and the howling, cruel winds would drift them over a half-hour after we had passed.

"The day I sensed that I had crossed the wrong divide was a bitter one. When I stopped in the bottom of a gulch to make camp I could hardly get kindling cut, and my tent and stove up, before my mittened hands became too stiff to handle the axe. But I got the fire going, fed my dogs and myself, and was soon comfortable enough. In the morning I was startled to find that, while I slept, my dogs had stolen a slab of bacon from under the edge of the tent and had torn open my bags of oatmeal and scattered their contents in the snow. I had only one side of bacon left and no meal of any kind. There was no sign of any game.

"To shorten the misery of the narrative let me just tell you that before I reached the head of the gulch, to cross over the divide back towards McQuesten, I had no grub left to feed either myself or my hungry dogs. Making camp that night with benumbed fingers my axe slipped and cut into my moccasined foot. I cursed myself for the fool I was in trying to make this trip alone. It was a painful ten minutes, in which a moment's delay might be fatal, before I got my foot bound up and the fire going enough to warm my hands

so that I could get more wood. I cut what I could before dark. I had only a pound of butter and some salt and sugar left. I ate part of the butter as my supper and let the malemutes howl for theirs. Then I examined my foot and saw that I daren't travel for a day at least.

"Next morning I wakened starving hungry, and with my foot paining me severely. Well, in extremity, there is no use being squeamish, so I shot one of the dogs, cleaned and cooked his carcass, and the other two dogs and myself ate him.

"All I can say about that meal is that it was better than starving.

"The next morning I knew that, foot or no foot, my life depended clearly on me getting over the divide within twenty-four hours. There must be no delay. I was becoming so weak. I cut kindling and a few small sticks of wood to take with me. Our progress would be limpingly slow on that climb, and I might have to make camp on the summit where there was no timber.

"The agony of that four-mile struggle in the bitter cold was beyond belief. I was weak from want of food, my foot was extremely sore, and the two dogs could hardly pull the sleigh. Most of the way I had to go ahead and break trail on snow shoes. Only a man who knows these winter trails can appreciate what I went through. Thank God, I reached the summit. I made camp there, killed my second dog, a

small thin beast, and the lead-dog, the only one remaining, and I ate part of him. I saved some for next day. The following day we toiled down towards Clear Creek, eating nothing, until, about the middle of the afternoon, I gave out through exhaustion. I put up my tent, cooked the last bit of dog, and shared it with my leader.

"In the morning I could hardly stand. The trail was now easy-going, downstream and mostly on the smooth ice of the creek. It was ten miles to Hunter Young's cabin. If I could only make that I was safe, for there was grub, fuel, and shelter there.

"My dog could hardly travel and yet the poor beast would have to pull me if I were to get there at all, and he hadn't strength to do it without food. It was life or death, and I determined to try what seemed a silly scheme. It was my last resource. I tied the dog securely, caught his tail and chopped it off close up to the body. He howled with pain but soon licked the wound into decent shape. I singed the hairs off his tail, cleaned it and made broth. I drank the hot liquid and fed the meat and bones to my dog! It was a most unusual thing for a dog to eat his own tail and enjoy it!

"I hitched him up and we started. I hobbled along behind until I felt myself going faint. Then I tumbled into the sleigh and pulled the robe tight around me. I was half unconscious when Young found us a mile

up from his cabin. My dog had gone on until he had come to a heavy drift and couldn't get me through. The puzzled brute had then sent up his long wolf-howls. The prospector heard them and came up to see if he could get a wolf-hide.

"All went well after that. Young's big dog, which had followed him, was put into the harness. My leader rode on the sleigh with me. With a strong dog in front, and my friends at the sleigh handles behind, we made his cabin in no time.

"He nursed me back to health and strength. My foot became practically well in a few days, but I wouldn't set out back for Bonanza until Young was free to go with me. He came as far as Dominion Creek where the mines were working and there were cabins along the trail. Then I felt I was able to go on myself. I parted from him with words of grateful thanks.

"The memory of the last days of that trip, when death seemed to walk beside me every minute, is like a frightful nightmare. It has done me a world of good to speak it out to you, Pringle, and it doesn't seem so terrible, somehow, now that I've put it all into words. And you see, too, why I named my story 'Dog Eat Dog'!"

It was a great tale, told more thrillingly than I could hope to do, for my telling is second-hand. But perhaps, in my attempt to reproduce it, you may have

caught something of the wildness, adventure, and dread loneliness of our Northland trails.

A day or two on Eureka and I started back. My brother came down to the mouth of the creek. There we made a stout little log raft. On it, with rough paddle, I was able to make a diagonal course through the roaring river to the opposite shore and then took the trail up Indian. When I came to my written notice I took it down and put it in my pocket as a souvenir. I have it yet. It reads:

> I am attempting
> to wade across Indian,
> through the overflow, to
> Eureka. Starting 5 p.m., Ap. 10th, 1903.
>
> GEORGE PRINGLE.

CHAPTER XXIII.

SCOTLAND ON LEAVE.

IT was very welcome news when our adjutant, Major Ferguson, told me, after mess one day at Chateau de la Haie, that my leave had arrived and I could get my railway warrant for any place in the British Isles to which I wished to go. I had long decided that when my first leave came through I would take my warrant right to Aberdeen, spend a day there and then, returning, use the rest of my time in Edinburgh. My father had been born and raised in Auld Reekie, had run away from home when a lad and had never gone back. Many, many times had he spoken to me about his native city which he loved with a very real affection. When we were little children and would ask him to tell us a story in the evening, before we went to bed, he would usually respond with one about Edinburgh. So my love for that fair city had been come by honestly. Indeed I can truly say that I knew the main features of the place exceedingly well before I ever saw it.

Thus I was delighted and excited at the prospect of seeing Scotland and its capital for the first time in my life. The war has been rightfully cursed, up and

down, as a stupendous, barbarous blunder. But it is grossly unfair to say that it was "all to the bad." For one thing, if it had not been for the war, thousands of Canadians, young and old, would never have had the time or money to see the Old Land, the land of our ancestors, from which came our language, customs, laws, literature, religion, and many of the finest traditions we have. The war gave us this trip across the Atlantic at no personal financial cost, and there is no doubt the journeys we took, on leave or on duty, were highly educative and often very enjoyable.

I got away early in the morning and caught a train at a neighboring town. Then followed an aggravatingly slow trip to Boulogne which we reached late that afternoon. I was glad to get out of the coach, which was packed to suffocation and into the open where I could stretch my legs. First I journeyed down to the wharf to get definite word about my boat and have my warrant viséd. We were to embark the next morning if the coast was clear. Then I went back up town, found a place to sleep, stowed my stuff, and went out to get something to eat. We hadn't had much fancy food at our meals in the line and I confess I went a little too strong on French pastries. I took in a concert in a Y. M. C. A. hut in the evening, and then to bed. I was aboard in good time in the morning and we put out for England about nine. It was raining and blowing, and, when we were well into the Channel,

it was disagreeably evident that the trip would be a rough one. There must have been several thousand soldiers aboard. There was hardly standing room.

On account of the storm the order soon came for everyone to go between decks, and the hatches were closed down. This crowded us worse than ever. The heat, smell from the engine room, and the dense tobacco smoke, made the air almost unbreathable. That was enough in itself to upset one, but when you add to it the plunging and rolling of the ship you can well believe that seventy-five per cent. of the men became seasick. I had prided myself on being immune and hoped that I would be able to stick it this time. However I was getting pretty shaky. That rich pastry had weakened my resistance! But I think I could have held out if it hadn't been for an incident that tipped the scales the wrong way. After standing for a long time I had at last obtained a seat. Many had become vacant on account of former occupants having urgent business elsewhere! My mental energies were fully occupied trying to make my stomach believe that everything was nice and normal. Unluckily a pale-faced friend saw me, lurched over, and sat down at my side. He spoke a few troubled words about the nasty conditions of things in general, just the very ideas I was trying to avoid, and then he shot like a falling star across to a large tub that had been placed in position at the side of the room. It was too much for me. I scrambled over

too and joined the raucous chorus which was vigorously rendering that classic selection entitled *The Return of the Swallow!* May I boast that this was my first, last, and only time, and make the excuse that the conditions, within and without, were exceptionally bad? We were all unfeignedly glad to dock at Folkestone and get off the boat. In an hour or two we were in London, to me always an alluring city with an endless variety of interest. I spent Sunday there and preached in the Crouch Hill Presbyterian Church. The adjutant of the Cameron Highlanders had been an elder in that congregation and he had written the minister and arranged it.

Then, early in the week, I boarded the Scotch Express for Edinburgh. As I would be on all night I took a sleeping compartment. It was a tiny room, dainty and complete, one of a dozen or more on the same coach. This was twelve years ago. It is interesting to note that these Single Compartment Sleepers have been in use on this side of the Atlantic only about two years!

In the morning, the porter, an old Scot, brought me a tasty, light breakfast. Shortly afterwards we pulled into the Waverley station, Edinburgh. I got off and without any difficulty found my way to Princes Street, and there, looking up, I saw the Castle, so often pictured in my boyish imagination long ago. I felt right at home. It may be that some law of nature had

transmitted to me a fragment of my father's memory, for it seemed as if I, myself, had actually seen these streets and hills some former time.

But I had only an hour before my train was timed to leave for Aberdeen and I had to postpone my full enjoyment of happy wanderings until I returned. Aberdeen was reached about noon.

I went into the station restaurant to get dinner, my first meal on Scottish soil! I suppose you would call me sentimental. But the thought of it stirred me intensely. This was the land of my sires, and my mind and heart were steeped in its traditions. I cherished the memories of the great events and noble men and women which fill the pages of its history. So you can understand that this meal was a most memorable occasion in my life. Indeed it was almost sacramental.

The comely Scotch lassie, who came to take my order, smiled at me when she noted by my uniform that I was from Canada. She asked me what battalion I was with. Glad to have a chat I told her who and what I was and why this was, for me, a unique happening. She seemed interested. I had a good meal, as good as it possibly could be on war rations. It was well-cooked and well-served. I was happy and grateful. The cost was very moderate. I paid it and rose to go. I slipped a ten-shilling note under the edge of my plate as a gratuity for the bonnie lassie who had served me. Let me assure you that it is not my custom

to be anywhere near that generous after meals. A shilling would have been plenty and all that would be expected. But this was one of the high moments in my life, and the apparent extravagance was simply a poor attempt to express a deep emotion.

When I got near the door I heard some one coming after me and a voice calling, "Sir!" I turned to see my waitress. She was coming toward me with that ten-shilling note in her outstretched hand. "Thank you very much, sir," she said, "but I cannot take this. It is real good of you Canadians to come and help in this war that was none of your making. It's been a pleasure to meet you, sir, and to serve you. If I owned the restaurant you would have your meal free. I'd feel ashamed of myself if I took this money." The girl had tears in her eyes as she spoke. My attempted refusal was unavailing. I had to take back my money. I have travelled in a good many different parts of Europe and America, but never, on boat or train or in hotels, have I ever had my tip returned to me, anywhere, except in Aberdeen, Scotland!

I had a pleasant afternoon in Aberdeen roaming its streets, noting the clean beauty of its public buildings and its homes, builded mostly of its own fine granite. Then I took the train for the south and arrived in Edinburgh that evening. For the rest of my leave I wandered about Edinburgh, happy as could be, only wishing that my father, long dead, could be with me.

Of course I visited the Castle, Holyrood, John Knox's House, Arthur's Seat, Salisbury Crags, Calton Hill, Princes Street gardens with the flower-clock, climbed the Scott monument, and did the other usual things.

But I found my finest pleasure in going into those odd corners and doing that which memory suggested. I took a walk down the London Road because my father had told me that he and his twin brother, John, used to race the stage for London. They would wait until the driver had started up his horses and the stage was under way. Then the two bare-footed boys would scamper along by other streets across the city, through "closes," and out along paths down the east side of the town, and, if they were speedy enough, they would be out on the road to London in time to see the stage come along in full cry away on its journey to the far-off, wonderful city. For to the Scottish lad of that day, the normal boy of adventurous spirit, the sea and London were the two great lures. I wandered around Arthur's Seat and walked the trails along which my father's feet had gone. I roamed through the streets in that part of the city where his home had been. I spoke to blue-eyed, curly-haired lads that I thought might resemble my father when a boy. Their Scottish accent was music to me. Indeed it is wrong to speak of it as an accent. They speak with pleasant intonation. It is we Canadians with our nasal tones, and our often atrocious grammar, who are in most need of changing

our style of speech. During my sixteen months stay in Scotland, after the war, it was a pleasure to me to hear the language of the ordinary Edinburgh man or woman. Of course I'll admit that there are some words that are a little off-color! And in this connection may I venture to tell you of how, during that visit after the war, I once made a remarkable and unintentional "hit" with a gathering of Edinburgh children. One Sunday afternoon I had been asked to address a big Sunday School in the Pleasance, one of the poorer districts of the city. The children, about four hundred of them, were called in from their separate classes to the common hall and I was introduced as a soldier from far Canada who had a story to tell them. I told them a yarn about the malemute dogs of the Yukon, a team of them, my own huskies, that I drove thousands of miles over the snow trails. I was given a perfect hearing and I put my best into the telling. Everything went beautifully. I described the dog-sleigh, two feet wide and eight feet long, with its handles, like plow-handles, sticking out behind for the musher to hold and guide the sleigh. I told of these part-wolf malemutes, what they looked like, that they couldn't bark, could only howl. Gave them the trail words that the dogs knew. "Mush," to go; "Gee," to turn to the right; "Haw," to turn to the left; and, of course, that welcome word, "Whoa," which they obeyed sometimes so quickly that the musher was liable to go head-first

over his sleigh if he didn't watch himself! Then I told how we loaded the sleigh tent in the bottom, spread out as the wrapping of a bundle would be, then stove and grub and blankets, then the loose ends of the tent folded over and all lashed securely in. Under the lashing, but easy to get at, would be my snowshoes and rifle. It was about at this point that I broke up the meeting in a most unexpected manner. I spoke of my rifle. They all knew what that was. Then I told them that I wanted it on top of the sleigh, handy, so that I could get at it easily. "For," I said, "anytime I might see a moose and I'd want the rifle to shoot him with." There was a moment's pause while the lads looked at each other, and then they burst forth into uncontrollable laughter. I didn't need to say any more. I had unwittingly made one of the best jokes their young minds had ever heard. You see the Scotch for "mouse" is "moose," and the idea of using a rifle to shoot "a wee moose" was so funny, and had been sprung on them so suddenly, that they couldn't get over it. My speech ended abruptly. The meeting broke up, so to speak, into good-natured uproar. The superintendent, a noble fellow with the fine name of Robert Pringle, got them quiet by having a hymn sung. Then he thanked me for giving them such an interesting talk. I could see by the beaming faces of the children that it was a unanimous sentiment. Therefore I think it might be well in future for the good

Edinburgh folk to note the pronunciation of that one word, at least, and get it right!

So my leave passed like a pleasant dream, and at last I had to board the train for London, then Folkestone, then France, sympathizing right heartily with the Tommy as he used to sing:

I want to go home!
I want to go home!
The bullets they whistle,
The cannon they roar.
I don't want to go to the front any more.
Take me over the sea,
Where the Allemagne can't get at me.
Oh, my, I don't want to die,
I want to go home!

CHAPTER XXIV.

GERMANS.

DURING the war years I found it impossible to work up any hatred against our German antagonists. My life before that time had brought me into intimate contact with them and I had learned to like and respect them. No experiences in the war were able to destroy this regard.

I was born and brought up in the town of Galt, a Scotch settlement in the southern end of the county of Waterloo, province of Ontario. The northern half of the county is inhabited by people of German ancestry, the southern part by Scots. It was in my day the most prosperous county in the province. A newspaper argument on that question became so acute that an expert was hired to examine the files of mortgages to settle the dispute. He found that there were fewer mortgages on record against property in the county of Waterloo than in any other county in the province. The capital of Waterloo was the thriving town of Berlin, situated, as you would naturally suppose, in the German portion of the county. This name was foolishly changed, during the war fever, to Kitchener. In the two High Schools we young folks from all sur-

rounding parts met and became acquainted. Later I entered the teaching profession and taught a country school among the German farmers. I visited in their homes, was treated with great kindness, and found them industrious, Christian, and eager to give their children an education. I made many friends among them, young and old.

In 1894 I went to the University in the city of Toronto and there took the course in philosophy. One of the junior members of the faculty at that time was a young man lately come from one of the German colleges. There was no abler man in our department. He and I formed an acquaintance which ripened into friendship. Often he would come up to my room for a chat and we would go for walks together. He seemed to look upon me as a young brother and I felt honored and happy in his friendship. He would tell me many stories of his fatherland, describing customs and life in Germany, and sometimes would talk intimately of his own folks. He had many spells of homesickness.

After I left Toronto in 1898 I went to Minnesota and then to the far Yukon and during my ten years there got pretty well out of touch with University life. I found that my friend had gone back to Germany having accepted an honored place on the faculty of the University of Bonn.

The years went by and the war broke on us with its strange delirium of hate and carnage. In the spring

of 1916 I went overseas as a chaplain. After various postings in England I was sent to France and was there attached to the Cameron Highlanders of Canada, the 43rd battalion C.E.F. I served with them in the trenches for sixteen months. In those months we went through some cruel and nerve-wracking experiences. Our affairs included attacks around Avion, Lens, Hill 70, Passchendale, and the final victorious advance of the last hundred days. Of all these, Passchendale stands out as by far the most trying experience. Ludendorff in his "Memoirs" states that it was the worst period of the war on the German side. If it was bad for them, it was worse for us, the attacking force. The offensive commenced in October, during the chill, dark, rainy days of the fall. The ground we occupied, and that over which we made the attack, was simply miles of deep mud dotted with pools of water, green with the gas deposit. Poison gas fumes lay more or less over the whole area. There was scarcely any adequate protection. Trenches would slough in or fill with water. Troops came in or went out on miles or what we called duck-walks, narrow slat-walks laid in 8-foot sections on the mud. The wounded had to be carried out by the same route, and often and often, while on their laborious way, they were gassed and shelled. The torture and trials of the whole horrible business cannot be put into language.

The Ninth Brigade took over from the 1st Otagas of New Zealand who had advanced the British line at that section to within 200 yards of the foot of Bellevue Spur, back of which, and within sight, was the village of Passchendale. The Spur was still occupied by the enemy who, from their concrete emplacements on the heights, made us miserable with shells, gas and bullets.

The order came that the Ninth Brigade were to try to take the Spur. My battalion, the 43rd, was to make the main attack with the 58th on our right, the 52nd in support, and the 116th as a work unit. Zero hour was appointed for the morning of October 26th. Our forward headquarters was in a concrete shelter consisting of two small rooms with dome-shaped roof of concrete thick enough for protection from ordinary field guns. From the outside it looked like the half of an enormous, roughly-shaped egg, placed end up in the mud. There was room in it for perhaps a score or so of soldiers. We called it the Waterloo "Pill-Box."

An odd coincidence occurred there the night before the attack. About midnight a sergeant came in and reported to me that Lieutenant Hollis, one of our choicest young officers, had been killed. I went out and found his body lying a few yards away from headquarters. It was pitch dark, the body was heavy in the mud, and I found it impossible to get at his pocket. Returning to the emplacement I collided with

a man in the darkness and asked him if he had a flashlight, found he had and requested him to come along and help me. We went back together and very carefully shading the light, which we kept on just for a breath, I was able to get all papers and articles of interest and value.

Now strict orders had been given that no lights of any kind were to be used that night, and all speaking was to be done in a whisper. The enemy's lines were very near and in the dense darkness who knew but what they might be creeping up and closing in on us. Any light, clearly displayed, would bring down upon us a storm of machine-gun and snipers' bullets. A lighted match, or even the glow of a cigarette, might betray our position. So when this momentary flash, which I had taken great care should be invisible from the German side, showed to the sentry at the pill-box I heard a stern voice, in a scarcely-subdued whisper which had the full force of a command from Field Marshal Haig, call, "Put that light out!" The order was obeyed before we heard it, for I had then achieved my purpose. I knew those authoritative tones very well. It was our good, old, regimental-sergt.-major Lowe.

I then went into the emplacement, my helper following me. The candle-light showed his uniform to be that of a Canadian Engineer, and when I looked at his face, I was greatly surprised and delighted to see

that it was Noel Robinson. In 1910 I came out of the Yukon after more than ten years there. In Vancouver I was asked to give an address descriptive of the North. Robinson was then a cub-reporter and, I think, I was his first assignment in reporting a speech. He gave me a write-up that showed he possessed, not only news-sense, but that rarer gift which can see and interpret finer, inner meanings. I had, therefore, a very clear and kindly recollection of the occasion, for that was the first time I had ever spoken in public on my Klondike experiences. The newspaper report, which I looked for with anxiety, was so appreciative and good that it gave me needed self-confidence in future efforts.

How passing strange that our next meeting should come this queer way, on the eve of battle, that weird and fearsome night! Surely "truth is stranger than fiction!" Robinson had spent the previous hours of darkness working hard in No-man's land with a small party who were laying "duck-walks" across a swampy rivulet, that ran along the foot of the spur, so that our men could cross in the attack, at grey dawn, without being bogged. It was a fearfully risky task, although he made light of it, for the enemy were scarcely a stone's throw away.

We met several times overseas after that. He was wounded in one affair but with cheerful courage he is back in civilian life "carrying on" at his old job

with one of the Vancouver dailies. I honor these men. Their sensitive natures suffered intensely in the crude brutality of war. Yet they went on, during these mad years, bravely doing their duty. After it was over they came back, older and handicapped by wounds and weakness, and during these difficult days have been seeking to find their lost footing again, and make those painful adjustments necessary in earning their living in our keenly competitive life. Such fine fortitude, quiet, unassuming, and unfailing, has my deepest admiration.

Early in the morning of the 26th the infernal noise of big guns commenced, many thousands of shells, German and British, bursting amongst us. For several hours the situation was critical. The 58th was held up. We got a precarious footing on the Spur which we would not have been able to hold long against a counter-attack if the 52nd had not come to our aid and driven the flanking enemy back. This enabled us to win and occupy all their trenches and pill-boxes and make our new position secure. In the afternoon our casualties commenced to stream down. I was most of my time then at the Waterloo headquarters, where the wounded were brought for a hurried inspection and dressing by the medical officers before they were taken on the long journey, by stretcher-bearers, down the duck-walks to the far-off rear-dressing-station. They were soon lying by our

pill-box in rows, on stretchers, in the mud and rain. Many were dying, some died right there. Several shells dropped among them as they lay there helpless. It was all unspeakably heart-rending.

I gave them what aid I could, cheering them, doing simple dressings, and directing the stretcher-bearers. Several German wounded lay amongst our own men. Looking them over I noticed one lad with fair hair and blue eyes. In appearance he might have been my own son George. He was very young. The down, untouched by razor, was on his lip, and his mouth was still held "in that sweet pout shaped by the mother's breast." One look at his horrible abdominal wound and I knew he hadn't more than a minute or two to live. He had opened his eyes and was looking up at me. I smiled at him and requested his name. Surprised at his reply I asked for further detail. Brief question and answer brought out what I could hardly credit and yet it was true. His uncle was my old friend of long-ago University days! Then I told him my name and after a moment his boyish face lighted up and he said: "Yes, I remember my uncle speaking of you. He liked you." Needless to say I was amazed. But the poor lad's strength was almost gone. He closed his eyes. His white, mud-bespattered face seemed to look a little less pain-wracked because it was his uncle's friend who was near him in his death. His eyes remained closed but

I could see his lips moving and at last, clear and sweet in boyish treble, he called out, *Meine mütter! meine mütter!* As he called for his mother, death came to him. Tears were falling from my eyes as I searched for his pay-book to find his full-name and the address of his next of kin. After dark that night some of my Cameron boys made a hastily dug trench for our dead that lay at hand. I buried the body of the German boy alongside those of my own Camerons and gave their spirits over into the care of our common Heavenly Father. No, I never could work up any hate toward the Germans.

CHAPTER XXV.

BITS FROM A PADRE'S LETTERS.

Somewhere in France, June 8, 1917.

AT last I have been able to get a little time under reasonable circumstances to write you a letter. A letter a day since I came to this battalion would not be sufficient to tell of all the intensely interesting events that have been taking place in my immediate neighborhood.

At dusk on May 24th I started on foot across Vimy Ridge and down the other side towards our line in front of Petit Vimy. Before I reached our trenches I was under big-shell fire for the first time. At the outset I was confused by the weird whistling of the shells passing through the air above me. It seemed as if they were all coming straight at my unlucky head. But you soon develop a sort of "shell-sense," and learn to distinguish between "ours" and "theirs," "visitors" and "passers-by."

I reached my destination in a trench dug-out safely, although on the way three of our little party were seriously wounded, and one was killed. After dark

I buried the dead man. Myself and four stretcher-bearers took the body to where there was a little cluster of graves. On our way we had to take shelter frequently. A very brief ceremony was held. On another sector of the line, to our right, a heavy barrage was being laid down by the artillery. The noise was so loud and continuous that my voice could hardly be heard by the men standing a few feet away.

On Sunday afternoon I had the strangest "Sabbath Day's" walk I have ever had. I wanted to go right up into the "jumping-off" trench next no-man's land to see just how things looked and felt, and chat with my Cameron men. It started beautifully but suddenly "Fritz" commenced to send over showers of shrapnel. It was banging up in the air above our heads as it exploded, and down would come fragments of the bursting hardware whistling around our ears and into the ground. It was too noisy and nasty for me. Doubled like jack-knives, Macpherson and I scooted along the trench looking for better shelter. I was thrown on my face by the force of one explosion, and showered with dirt several times, but never hurt. We were glad to get into Capt. Gardiner's little cellar and there we waited till the storm ceased. In an hour it was clear and quiet in our locality and we got back to our own dug-out. I wrote a little note to you while in Gardiner's shelter with shrapnel thudding on the roof. I enclose it.

Sunday evening our time was up in the trenches and we were relieved by the 2nd C.M.R.'s. We stayed a few days in support. On Sunday, June 3rd, we had the first parade service to be held by any unit on Vimy Ridge after the great battle in April, a battle made historic in the annals of Canadian victories. When our O. C. mentioned the possibility of an open-air service to me, I felt loath to favor it, for fear of endangering the lives of the men. We talked it over and viewed the ground and decided that, with due precautions, it would be reasonably safe and the men would enjoy it. For the parade we selected a lovely, grassy spot, colored beautifully with hundreds of wild poppies.

It was a beautiful sunny morning and there was a fine turn-out. Before Col. Grassie handed the battalion over to me he told them that if there was the slightest evidence of shelling, or if they heard the sound of enemy air-craft, they were to take shelter immediately, without any word of command. Trenches, with dug-outs in them, were plentiful a few yards away on all sides of us, so that we were taking hardly any risk. I read the Scripture and prayed, and after singing a favorite hymn, I had them all sit down among the poppies. There, with evidences of the carnage of war all around us, Canadian soldiers in a foreign land, on ground which a few weeks before was red with the blood of our comrades, we lifted our hearts and voices to God who, in Christ, gave Himself

for us. Standing to speak I could see, within rifle shot, Lens and other points within the enemy's lines. After the service Communion was held to which about 200 officers and men remained. Col. Grassie passed the bread and one of the privates passed the wine. At the Lord's Table there is no difference in rank. It was indeed a memorable occasion. I am going to keep carefully the chalice we used and bring it home with me.

About the middle of the week we went back to this pleasant little village for "rest" for a few days. We are not subject to shell fire, nor are there any of our own noisy guns around us, interfering, by their constant discharge, with repose of body or mind. The village has been pretty well smashed up with shelling, although not so badly ruined as some I have seen. One near our last rest camp, which had evidently been quite an extensive town, is now simply countless rubbish heaps. You go in among the piles of smashed-up brick and plaster and find portions of gardens, with patches of currants, gooseberries, strawberries and flowers. It is all filled with pathetic meaning.

In this village the guns which the Canadians captured at Vimy are all lined up. Yesterday afternoon Field Marshal Haig, General Byng, General Horne, and their Staffs, came along to a big celebration that had been arranged. The bagpipe music was the most wonderful by far that I have ever heard or, I suppose,

ever will hear. The pipe-bands of the Canadian Corps were massed for the event, and played in unison half the afternoon in the square beside the guns, marching and countermarching, looking very gay and picturesque in their different full-dress tartans and regalia. There were 160 pipers and 100 drums all playing as one band!

July 21st.

Back in the line again and writing by candle-light in one of the "halls" of our underground home. One of the officers, sitting beside me and writing too, has just shown me a bit of poetry he has composed. Here is a copy of it. It truly exposes the ghastliness of war. He went through Vimy and many of his comrades were killed.

FAR AWAY

(Written by an Officer on finding a dead Soldier after the advance on Vimy Ridge, 1917)

With equipment strapped to my shoulder
And my rifle close to my hand,
My head stretched out on a boulder,
I wait here, in No Man's Land.
'Mid the litter and lumber of battle,
And the shell-churned clay of France,
Where the craters and crumbling trenches
Bear the signs of the hoped for advance.

FROM A PADRE'S LETTERS

I wait while the barrage lengthens,
 While the rifles crack over the hill,
Then the bombs explode in the dug-outs
 And the first line trench grows still,
'Mid the crash of the answering shrapnel,
 Lit by signal flares of the Hun,
As the final waves go over
 To the 'tat' of the Lewis gun.

Out here in the cold and tempest,
 Thick mud on my khaki form,
I wait, through the long day's battle,
 Through the night of the snow and the storm,
Till the fighting surges forward,
 And the No Man's Land of the past
Is a place of quiet and shelter
 And reaches its peace at last.

I wait till the burying party
 Shall find me here in the clay,
Shall loose the disc from my bosom
 And take my poor trinkets away.
Then dig a grave to lay me
 Away from the weary war,
And the shell-torn crest of Vimy
 Shall cradle me evermore.

And then in the Roll of Honor,
 (Just one feeble Flicker of Fame
Ere I sink in the Great Oblivion)
 Will be written my humble name.
And the fighting will still press Eastward
 To the Victory close at hand,
But I shall be dreamlessly sleeping
 In the quiet of No Man's Land.

Here is another bit that we handed to me by one of the men:

> Ah, how we miss you, dear old chum,
> Without you now the world seems bum.
> A flower knocked out in life's young day,
> But still thy memory will always stay.
> We little thought thee'd go so soon,
> 'Twas six in the morning instead of noon.
> Thee are missed by many friends so dear,
> And in their memory still live here.

These are lines written, after much travail, in memory of a dead comrade, and, while they are not first-class poetry, they represent the loving tribute of a true friend's deep sorrow. There is more of genuine feeling in them than has inspired many a finer composition.

Jan. 23rd, 1918.

Eight months ago yesterday I joined the Cameron Highlanders. After months in England as chaplain at the Shorncliffe Military Hospital, how delighted I was to get word that I was to go to France at long last. A few weeks with No. 2 Canadian Casualty Clearing Station at Rimy, near Poperinghe, and then, with my lucky star still in the ascendant, I was sent to this unit, the 43rd battalion C.E.F., Cameron Highlanders of Canada.

In those eight months what a variety of intense experiences! The night I went in with the ration party and came under shell fire for the first time; my first night in a dug-out; my Sunday afternoon walk and the barrage I got mixed up with; my first burial on the field (how many since!); my first sight and handling of the dead and wounded; my secret visits, with Macpherson, to No-man's-land; the aeroplane fights and crashings; the long marches by day and night; the anxieties: I can never forget them all Nor shall I forget the larks singing in mid-air amongst the bursting shrapnel; the wild flowers so beautiful, and growing every place where there was a possible chance for them; the good comradeship; the good times now and then, to descend to more intimate and ever present things, the rats and lice. Then there was the interest and variety in our lives through the movements required to different parts of the battle-front, seeing new towns and villages and different types of people, Flanders with its mud, flatness and misery; France with its hillier and more beautiful scenery and its likeable people.

I am very thankful to have had these experiences and to have learnt the lessons about myself and other people that these eight months have forced me to learn. They have cleared away a lot of screens that, in peace, hide the realities of human nature in my fellows, and they also have given me a truer and humbling knowl-

edge of my own self. It is impossible, of course, to value the effect on oneself of these stirring, trying months of strange life. I have no desire to see now the details of the experiences through which it may be my lot to pass in the next few months. I know only too well what some of them will be and they are not pleasant to contemplate. But the sane comradeship, kindness, high courage, and faith, that I have seen around me in the past, will persist until we achieve a victorious peace, a peace reached by force of arms, but shaped for the future according to ideals of Christian justice and generous brotherhood.

Mentone, on the shore of the Mediterranean.
February 3rd, 1918.

I do not know how to tell you all there is worth telling about my present home. It is such a glorious, gorgeous place. I'd better go back and let you know about leaving the battalion. I contracted a bad cold during the Passchendale affair and a troublesome cough developed. Our new Commanding Officer, Lt.-Col. H. M. Urquhart, very kindly interested himself in my condition, and had our Medical Officer examine me. He said it was "gas." I had become pretty badly run-down. These two good friends put their heads together and pulled wires until this wonderful

leave came through. I am to be a month at least on the French Riviera, am to stay until I thoroughly recuperate. I left the battalion on Jan. 28th, coming away from the mud and cold of the trenches, journeyed to Boulogne, thence to Paris, and after three hours there, off to the south. The first night of the trip I spent with my big, famous brother, Rev. Dr. John Pringle, who is at present one of the chaplains in the Base Hospital at Etaples. He is 65 years of age and came over with the First Canadian Contingent in 1914. We were together in the Yukon also, where he made a fine, outstanding record of noble service. He is a great favorite among the men in hospital at Etaples. Every unit to which he has been attached holds him in very high esteem. I stopped a short time, en route, at Amiens, Dijon, Lyons, Marseilles, Toulon, San Raphael, Cannes, Nice, Monaco, Monte Carlo, and about one o'clock Saturday morning, Feb. 3rd, arrived at Mentone. Cars were waiting there to take us the mile and a half to "Cap Martin" where this gorgeous hotel is situated. It is the most beautiful hotel on the Riviera. Owned by Lord Michelham, it was turned over to the Royal Army Medical Corps to be used as a Convalescent Home for officers. "Cap" is simply French for "Cape." It is a small promontory stretching its rounded, wooded point three or four miles out into the Mediterranean. There we were given a dainty, delicious midnight luncheon and assigned to our rooms.

Mine is No. 116, a lovely room, beautifully decorated, lofty ceiling painted with iris flowers in the corners of the panels and the walls tastefully papered. There is a marble mantelpiece, three fine, full-length mirrors, with other furniture of costly make. The bed is a large, elegant, brass affair and very comfortable. The carpet is rich and soft. You sink into it almost to your chin! The large windows, coming down to the floor-level, open like doors into the room and look out on the blue waters of the sea. There is a little balcony in front of my window. From it I can see below me a dozen orange, lemon, and grape-fruit trees, laden with ripe or ripening fruit. Thirty million lemons are exported from Mentone annually. The azure sea is only fifty yards away. The woods run down to within twenty yards of the water, the remaining distance being shore. These rocks are a white rock-crystalline formation, honeycombed by the sea. Even they are picturesque and seem to fit in perfectly to the whole effect. All through the woods run gravelly paths edged with lovely flowers among perfect turf. There are groves of bamboos, many kinds of giant cacti growing higher than my head, giant rhododendrons, and giant geraniums, many of the latter in flower, with climbing roses, blossoming vines and beautiful shrubs unknown to me. Some of the other trees are the fig-tree, chestnut, plane, pepper, locust, and prickly pear, with here and there an ancient olive. I cannot com-

mence to name the many pretty flowers set in beds and borders.

When I wakened the first morning, and threw open my window, letting the glorious sunshine pour in and gazing at that entrancing scene before me, so indescribably different from the 'trenches' I had just left, I might have been excused if I had fancied that perhaps a shell had hit me and I had gone to the Happy Land of which we chaplains preach. It really seemed like a wonderful, magic dream after the dreariness and wreckage of the line in winter. There is no sign of war about this district except the uniform of the officers and their crippled and weakly bodies.

The hotel is one of the most magnificent buildings I have seen and sits in perfect harmony with its surroundings. It is six or seven stories in height but gives no sky-scraper impression, looks, with its white marble finish, like a palace of crystal against the dark background of the trees and mountains. The public rooms, which are numerous, are all planned on a generous scale and are finished, as are also the halls, mainly in white, with stately marble pillars, and steps of marble slabs. It has, of course, all modern conveniences. You can hardly imagine a more beautiful hotel and a finer site. There are nearly three hundred officers here and yet there is not the slightest sense of crowding. A half dozen are Canadians, the rest are from Imperial units.

The meals are all to the King's taste. The head chef is from the Savoy Hotel, London, and the rest of the staff are the regular French and Italian waiters. There is a splendid orchestra. When I tell you that this hotel has the reputation of being the finest on the Riviera, and that everything around the place and in it seems to be in harmony with that standing, you will realize the gorgeousness of my present home.

After breakfast the first day I strolled down through the grounds to the shore. I lay down in a cozy place for a while, with the sun pouring warmly over me. Then I sat up and looked long and carefully over the sea to catch a glimpse of Africa. It was, I knew, too far away but it was worth a try. Then I bethought myself that I had never tasted the Mediterranean or bathed my feet in its waters, that famous sea on whose surface and along whose shores centuries of the most intense and vital history of mankind had been written. Babylonia, Assyria, and Persia had done business in its waters. It had been the great thoroughfare of the world during the amazing histories of Egypt, Greece, Rome, and Carthage. It had seen their rise and fall. It had borne upon its surface boats of all nations and of all times. If it could only speak what thrilling stories it could tell. I leaned over and lifted a handful of its blue water to my lips. I found it very salty and unpleasant but, for sentiment's sake, I held it in my mouth for a little while before spitting

it out. Then I took off my shoes and bathed my feet in the sea!

Feb. 10th.

I have been here a week now and the fresh air, sunshine, and good food are working wonders. Yesterday afternoon I felt so fit that I decided to try a tramp up the mountains to the little village of Castellare. I left at half-past two and was back at half-past six. I walked every foot of the way and am thoroughly tired, but I enjoyed it all immensely. I had a cup of tea at the village. It was a perfect day and I walked leisurely up the winding road, enjoying the magnificent and ever-changing view around us. Müller describes it in these words, "A few fleecy clouds chase each other in quick succession, and light and shade have therefore full play. The picture alters with every step. The air is pure, soft, and pleasant; the numerous indentations of the coast offer, far east and west, a great variety of views. The Lérin islands look dim; the Tête de Chien (above Monaco), as a dutiful dog, seems wide awake; Cap Martin, not in its brightest mood, wears a thin grey veil. As the afternoon wears on the western mountains, in their deep, dark grey, becoming later a silhouette of majestic outlines, form a strong contrast to the eastern slopes where rosy sunbeams play at hide and seek. The monastery of An-

nunziata, re-modelled, whitewashed, and embellished, looks by far too gay for her brownish monks. Gorbio village, the soberminded, is meditating on her glorious past, and still bewailing those five hundred men and women of hers once carried off as slaves by the savage Saracens. The castle of St. Agnes looks lonely on its lofty cone but still bears witness against the destructive actions of time and man.

"Such is something of the revolving picture we behold as we ascend by our circuitous route. It is an interesting canvas, south, east, and west; the present and the past, the warrior and the monk, strangers and natives, land and sea, elbowing each other, to-day and in history, in divers ways, to make the picture all the more sublime.

"Finally we come to the last incline and enter through the village wall into the little square and under its stately wide-spreading elm tree. The tree bids welcome to all comers to this tiny village clinging to a shelf on the mountain side. The tree shelters many sparrows whose eyes are no brighter than those of the little children who scan us with sparkling eyes from head to foot. What a pity that their pretty little owners seem to be so shy of water for washing, and brush and comb, and leave the brightness of their dark handsome faces more or less in eclipse!"

I played hop-scotch with one of these little girls and we had quite a group around us in no time. They

played it quite differently from what we did. I got interested in comparing methods and so did they. I then had a good pot of tea with bread and mountain-honey, eaten at a little table under an awning. It was romantic to be sitting there among the crags in this very ancient village with its long and chequered history.

In full view there was a large, public clothes-washing place. It consists of two large stone reservoirs with clean water always running through them from the fountain. The top stones are worn smooth as glass with repeated rubbings of clothes on them. One woman was at work and evidently making a good job of it. After tea I started homewards towards the bottom of the mountain. I took a short cut through the groves. In one of them the oranges were hitting against my cap. Then I emerged on the main road. It was getting pleasantly cool and I struck a good swinging gait that soon brought me home.

Feb. 5th.

Cap Martin lies about midway between Monte Carlo and the Italian border. Mentone is at the border, and although it is in France, in some ways it is more Italian than French. Mentone and Monte Carlo are each about three miles from our hotel. Both are in plain view from my balcony and are like white fairy-

cities. You have heard the phrase "the blue Mediterranean," and so it is. The water is very clear. You can see a great depth into it. That and the contrasting background of white rocks may be the cause, but the deep blue effect is certainly there. It is there as I have never seen it on any other body of water except perhaps Lake Atlin on the northern boundary of British Columbia. That lake is also surrounded, largely by white mountains, white there with snow or glaciers, and has white rocky shores, and its waters are transparent to great depths. To-morrow I am planning to pay my first visit to the far-famed gambling-city of Monte Carlo.

Feb. 6th.

I carried out my trip to Monte Carlo pretty much as planned. I walked along the shore paths until I got to the village of Rocquebrun where I had to take to the road. While near the shore and going through the woods I could smell the sea mingled with the odor of the fir trees and flowers. At Rocquebrun I saw countless lemon and orange trees, laden with fruit. Although the place is really on a mountain-side, yet, with their tiny terraces of a few feet wide, they manage to do wonders. The sweet peas were in blossom in the gardens, the vines four to six feet tall.

At last I entered the boundaries of the world-renowned principality of Monaco, about a mile long and

three-quarters wide, in which is Monte Carlo. I went first to the Casino and there took a ten-minute look through the door of the principal gambling room and saw the games going on. Everything was quiet and orderly among those gathered around the tables in the lovely, large hall. Indeed there is far more noise and seems to be far more excitement in an ordinary Stock Exchange. Being in uniform I was not allowed in. If you go in you are not allowed to take a stick or umbrella with you. Presumably you might use them on the dealer if you lost! A half hour in the large and richly-finished entrance hall and then I went over to the Café de Paris and had luncheon. The walk had made me hungry and I filled up "all the corners" before I asked for my bill. It was a bill of ample proportions you can be sure. But I had had a satisfying meal of delicious food, perfectly cooked and well-served, and besides I didn't mind some extravagance connected with my first meal in this famous city.

Then I went over to the Casino to see a matinée pantomime- play in the theatre. The theatre is a gem. There is hardly a square inch on the walls that is not tastefully ornamented. A large mirror covers a portion of one of them and in it you can see the performers nearly as well as by direct vision. The play was in three acts with several scenes in each. It was remarkable in that not a single word was spoken throughout. The programme, printed in French, gave you a pretty

good general idea of the play. The actors and actresses conveyed the full meaning and unfolding of the plot by their actions, unaided by the voice. It was extremely well done. The reason for the series of plays of this kind, which were being put on there, was the many hundreds of soldiers visiting the place who knew no French, or were not sufficiently versed in it to follow it when spoken in the play. The pantomime was intelligible to everyone and was very enjoyable. Of course some of the cleverest actors in France were taking part in these plays. The audiences are as a rule very critical here. You can understand that when you think of the many celebrities who visit Monte Carlo. The theatre orchestra itself was worth many times the price of admission for it only cost me three francs, about sixty cents, for one of the best seats. In chorus and principals there must have been one hundred and fifty people on the stage. There was nothing vulgar or unpleasant in any part of the performance.

After the play, about five o'clock, I started to walk back to Cap Martin, but got weary along the way and took the street car, landing home in time to get a good hot bath and dress for dinner. We have organized a fishing excursion on the Mediterranean for to-morrow, six of us are in the party. A boatman is bringing his boat and tackle for us. We are going to take our lunches.

Sometimes I wonder if I have really been in any

war! It seems hard to assure oneself that the war is still going on, for here it is an earthly paradise of sunshine, with indescribable beauty of land and sea. We live most luxuriously, a company of good fellows with peace and happiness abundantly in evidence.

After dinner, Tuesday evening, Feb. 7th.

Another perfect day is drawing to its close, most of its hours spent on a fishing boat in the Mediterranean. At the "zero hour" this morning the half dozen hopeful fishermen were all down at the foot of the stone steps that lead to a convenient landing-place, among the rocks, near the hotel. All we brought was our big well-filled lunch-basket. Our boatman, with his large dinghy, brought bait and tackle for us. We didn't have far to row out to the fishing ground, and soon we were anchored with all six lines in action. We fished from ten o'clocked until one, and I hate to say that we didn't catch a fish of any kind. There was fun over the question as to who was the "Jonah" of the party. Everyone was able to prove, to his own satisfaction at least, that he wasn't the guilty one. Then some bright fellow, with a mind for details, recalled that, when it came to fishing, Jonah was one of the most brilliant successes that we have any record of. He caught a whale unaided, and landed it too, without any tackle! Of course he was rather "down in the

mouth" during the experience, but the fact remains. Some good fishing-lies were told, of course, while we sat waiting for the tug at our lines that never came. One man said that where he came from there was a lake in which the fish were so numerous and eager that all you needed when you went fishing was a club. You just spit into the water, half-a-dozen fish would jump for it, and you clubbed them as they came up. You could always get three or four every time you sat! This was beaten by another fellow's story of the river near his place. The black bass there were so keen that you had to stand behind a tree to put the bait on the hook or they'd snatch it out of your hand!

But fate was against us this day as far as fishing went. We tried all the lucky charms we knew. We were all perfectly quiet for a spell with no results. Then we whistled all sorts of enticing tunes and sang songs of siren sweetness. We spat on our baits, and over our little fingers, changed tackle and bait, rowed to different places, but all in vain. We got some bites, alleged bites, but no fish. It was an off-day for us as fishermen. At one o'clock we turned our backs on the fish and gave our attention to a tasty luncheon and after a little more fruitless effort pulled our lines in and gave it up. Then we persuaded our man to hoist sail and up anchor, and we had a pleasant trip along the coast under the bright sun through these indigo waters. A panorama of surpassing beauty lay before us, look-

ing shoreward, of green woods, terraced mountains, and white glistening villas. Part of the time, for a hundred yards or so, we sailed through Italian waters. We could see the marked boundary of France and Italy where it crosses the shore road, a road that is in many places the old Roman road traversed by many famous men during the days of Rome's glory. Napoleon Bonaparte and his army marched along it in 1796.

About four o'clock we rowed into the Mentone harbor, climbed out of our boat, a happy party, and headed for the tramway. We were ready to enjoy our afternoon tea when we reached the hotel and later a good satisfying dinner. We have a stately old waiter who is very kind. You don't order what you want. You order what you don't want! He brings you every dish, in succession, on the bill of fare unless you tell him not to bring those certain things which you don't wish.

To-morrow we have ordered donkeys to make the trip into the mountains to the village of St. Agnes. We plan to start about ten. I am enjoying every minute here except, possibly, getting up in the mornings sometimes, and even that is easy with the glorious sunshine pouring into my room.

Feb. 8th.

We had our trip to the mountains by donkey to-day and everything went according to plan. We went

downtown and there got our "mokes." Each donkey had a woman to go with it to take care of it. We rode out in great state mounted on these diminutive, long-eared, flea-bitten-looking brutes and followed by the four Italian-French women.

We started to climb before we were out of town and for six miles we kept the up-grade on narrow, winding paths along ridges, or zigzagging up the sides of a slope too steep for more direct ascent, through terraced vineyards and under overhanging olive trees. For some distance we passed along the side of a precipice on a very narrow path, this latter combination stopping our talk and making us hope our donkeys were sure-footed. As always on these trips the most entrancing scenery lay spread to view on all sides of us.

Our objective was the village of St. Agnes, perched among the bare rocks, on a peak of the same name, about 2400 feet above the sea and only six miles away, which means a steep ascent. We got there in nice time for a luncheon which was a capital one. After lunching I climbed the ridge back of the house until I came to the old ruins at the top. It was once a Saracen stronghold built, in the tenth century, by a chief named Haroun who was shortly afterwards converted to Christianity by one of his captives named Anna, a maid from Provence, whom he married, and who was afterwards canonized as St. Agnes. From the

summit it was interesting to look down on the village. Its tiled roofs all seemed to be touching at the edges. They were of different sizes, slopes, and shapes, but you could easily think of one roof covering the whole three score houses.

On the way home we went through other two villages clinging to the mountain sides. Their streets are very narrow and there is a continuous twisting row of small dungeon-like stone houses on both sides. You are continually going through covered ways and under arches. Almost all the buildings are of stone which is the cheapest and handiest material. It all gives you the impression of going through the secret passages of an ancient castle. The streets are never level for more than a few yards, all up or down hill. I had a delightful cup of tea in the *Restaurant de la Renaissance,* sitting outside under the vines, in the street of one of these villages. Two or three orange trees were growing near and, with Madame's permission, I took one from the tree myself, my first orange plucked by my own hand! I also ate some ripe olives which I pulled from an olive tree about 500 years old. There are plenty of these trees that are a thousand years old. In color and shape the olives are like a large blue-berry. They taste slightly bitter. I do not think they are the variety we get in pickles. They use these to make olive oil. Several primitive presses were in use in the mountains along the route.

Altogether we had a grand day, lots of fun with the donkeys which wouldn't go faster than a trot and that only for a very short distance, had some amusing races on the better roads near town. Got home in time for a hot bath before a satisfying dinner, with music, soft, sweet, and classy, playing while we munched. You have read between the lines proof that my health is fine. I have hardly any cough, my appetite is more than good, and my general health is excellent. I have met a few congenial officers here and we usually knock around together so when I speak of "we" you will know my meaning.

Pancake Tuesday, or Mardi Gras.
Feb. 12th.

We have been on a long tramp to-day. Took the tram to Monte Carlo and there the little mountain railway up to La Turbie (The Tower). It is so-called because there are colossal remains there of what was once a massive spectacular tower-monument to the power of the Caesars. It was erected to commemorate the establishment of *Pax Romana* from the Mediterranean north to the German Ocean. It was built about 12 B. C., over nineteen centuries ago, and although time and the vandal hands of many contending armies have nearly destroyed it, enough is left to suggest the majestic proportions of the edifice. Built at the edge

of this mountain mesa, overlooking the sea, and over 225 feet in height, it could be seen for miles, and even now it commands your admiration. The little village is practically built out of fragments from the crumbling monument.

The Monte Carlo golf course and club-house are situated at La Turbie in full view of the Mediterranean. One of the members of the Club had arranged for us to have a game. So I am able to boast that my first game of golf was played on the far-famed Monte Carlo links.

We left La Turbie for Laghet, about three kilometres away inland, to see there the monastery and shrine where, it is said, our "Lady of Laghet" has performed and still performs so many miraculous cures. In effect it is a miniature of Lourdes. The walls of the cloisters are covered with crude pictures of sick beds, accidents of all sorts, such as runaways, persons falling from buildings, being run over by trains, getting caught in machinery, and so on, hundreds of small paintings or drawings of these events in which "Notre Dame de Laghet," by her gracious intercession, saved the person from injury or death. Then there are large areas on the walls which are covered with crutches, irons, and shoes, worn by cripples when they came to Laghet but which were left behind by those who were marvellously cured of their infirmities. All the vacant spaces on the walls, not occupied

as stated, are filled with pencilled petitions to "Our Lady" scribbled thereon in the supplicant's own handwriting. They are seemingly all much the same type. One prays for her fiancé that he may be brought safely back from the war, an orphan prays for a sick brother, a daughter prays that her father, who has gone on a long journey to America, may be protected and have good financial results in his business. I didn't read them all, of course, for it would take a week of steady work. The whole of the lower six feet of the four long walls are disfigured with these scribbled petitions. I have never seen a place like it. It makes you wonder, and do some serious thinking over all problems that touch the question of human suffering, the reason for its existence, and the power of prayer. With all our boasted knowledge we are surely surrounded by deep mysteries.

At La Turbie, returning, we inspected a small one-roomed olive-press. They put the olives into an enormous, circular, stone-mortar, about ten feet in diameter at the top. In it is a great stone, shaped like a grindstone a foot thick and seven feet through, being moved around on its edge my machinery and grinding the olives, stones and all, that lie two feet deep on the bottom. When they are well crushed the pulp is put into close-meshed rope-containers and these, half-a-dozen at a time, are placed in a press and the oil squeezed out of them. It has to be put through a

sieve after that and subjected to further refinement as required by the demands of the trade. Three men were running the whole concern. The power was electricity got from a mountain stream. It was all very simple. There was no boiling, no application of heat in any way.

Often as I speak of it I cannot give you the right impression of the glorious views we get from these mountains. To-day the white-topped Apennines in Italy could be seen to the left like far-off white clouds, in front the azure sea, and to the right the island of Corsica, just discernible, whence the great Napoleon came. The very road, the splendid Corniche road, on which we travel through these mountains, was built by him.

Feb. 25th.

I have had four very nice days. Yesterday I went over to Monaco and lunched at an odd, little, out-of-the-way restaurant. Then I went through the Oceanograph museum, which is the finest of its kind in the world. They show all the known varieties of sea products, animate and inanimate, how they are secured, and what use is made of them. They have specimens of sea animals from whales to the tiniest organisms held in solution in sea water, models of apparatus used in catching fish, big and little, taking tempera-

tures of deep waters, taking photos under water. You see how coral grows and how it is made into beads, how pearls develop, how cameo brooches are made. They have also a sea-aquarium where you can view many strange marine animals alive.

I then went to the anthropological museum where ancient skeletons of prehistoric man are shown which have been found in the caves along these shores, evidencing that man, in some sort, existed on this earth anywhere from 100,000 to 200,000 years ago. There are also many interesting Roman tablets and old millstones from the ancient Roman road which used to run along this coast.

This done I took in the palace of the prince of Monaco. It was very beautiful, but you grow wearied with gazing at lovely blue-rooms, and green-rooms, and rose-rooms, with furniture of a style set by various kings called Louis, and oil-paintings, and full-length gorgeously framed mirrors. The prince is not in residence at present so he missed seeing me!

On Sunday morning eight of us from the hotel walked down to morning service in a pretty church in Mentone. It is maintained by the Presbyterian church of Scotland for tourists and others who are protestant and English-speaking. The old minister, Dr. Somerville, met us in the vestibule and asked Col. (Dr.) Stewart of Halifax and myself if we would assist him

with Communion. This we agreed to do. I distributed the wine and Dr. Stewart the bread.

After church Capt. Fitzgerald and I went by carriage to Monte Carlo where we had been invited to luncheon by Mr. and Mrs. Thomas. We ate at the Hotel Windsor. There were six in the party. Besides those I have mentioned there were Baron Lehmann (a Hollander) and his wife, and Mme. Cancel. Baroness Lehman is an American woman of fine appearance and very capable. She had charge of all the Red Cross work in the Balkans during the first Balkan war. We had tea at Scapini's after a very pleasant social chat, and got back to Cap Martin just in time to change for dinner.

Feb. 28th.

This morning I got my marching orders. I leave for my battalion on Saturday, March 2nd, at 9.30 in the morning. This month has been a lovely, invigorating experience for me. I believe it has saved my life. This seems like a different world from that in which my battalion lives. In some ways I am sorry to go, and yet one would get tired, in time, of this do-nothing sort of life. But, nevertheless, I could easily stand another month of it. I am just commencing to get used to the place. At first one is in a mad rush to take this trip and that. One must see Monte

Carlo, Nice, Cannes, the mountain villages, and go on scenic trips. Then you gradually realize that you are running away from beauties that cannot be excelled, the lovely grounds, sea-front, and neighbouring walks around the hotel.

March 11.

I am back with my Cameron boys, got a royal welcome and feel right at home. Of course the horrid game still goes on. My first special duty after returning was to bury eight of our men who had been gassed. The enemy had thrown over some few explosive shells with an occasional gas shell amongst them which our gas-sentry didn't notice soon enough. Thirty were sent back to base hospitals. Some of them will die. How glad I'll be when the infernal business is all over! God grant that there will be no more wars once we are through with this mad orgy of murder!

Who goes there, in the night,
Across the storm-swept plain?

We are the ghosts of a valiant war—
Millions of murdered men!

Who goes there, at the dawn,
Across the sun-swept plain?

We are the hosts of those who swear:
It shall not be again!


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